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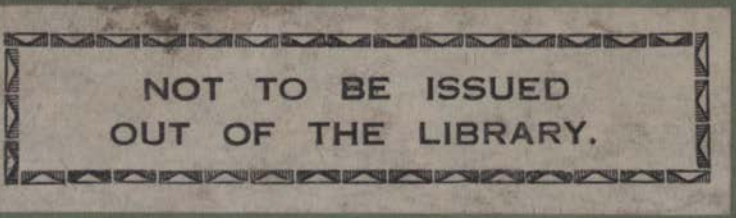
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# HISTORICAL SKETCHES OF THE REIGN OF QUEEN ANNE

*Frontispiece.*

QUEEN ANNE

*From a mezzotint, after a portrait by Sir Godfrey Kneller*

# HISTORICAL SKETCHES

OF THE

# REIGN OF QUEEN ANNE

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BY

MRS. OLIPHANT

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# NOTE

THESE sketches were written a number of years ago for the American magazine the *Century*, but the publication of them was long delayed, and it was found in the end that their length was too great to be consistent with the amount of illustrations, which are a great feature of that magazine. In these circumstances literature had to give way to art, and the papers were 'cut' as remorselessly, but much more cleverly, than Mr. Puff's play, the thread of the narratives being skilfully retained, while all that an author prizes in the superfluous way of literary style or ornament was cleared away. In this succinct and concentrated form the Sketches of the Reign of Queen Anne have been reproduced in America in a handsome volume, which, were they important enough to tempt any critic, it might be amusing to compare with this present English edition, which contains the chapters as they were written, untouched by the stern scissors of a transatlantic Fate—who perhaps might be found to be a deity benevolent to the reader, and not, except to the author, the blind Fury with the abhorred shears.

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# THE QUEEN AND THE DUCHESS

## I

THE age of Queen Anne is one of the most illustrious in English history. In literature it has been common to call it the Augustan age. In politics it has all the interest of a transition period, less agitating, but not less important than the actual era of revolution. In war it is, with the exception of the great European wars of the beginning of this century, the most glorious for the English arms of any that have elapsed since Henry V. established his supremacy in France. Opinions change as to the advantage of such superiorities; and still more as to the glory which is purchased by bloodshed; yet, according to the received nomenclature, and in the language of all the ages, the time of Marlborough cannot be characterised as anything but glorious. A great general, statesmen of eminence, great poets, men of letters of the first distinction; these are points in which this period cannot easily be excelled. It pleases the fancy to step historically from queen to queen, and to find in each a climax of national greatness knitting together the loose threads of the general web. 'The spacious times of great Elizabeth' bulk larger and more magnificently in history than those of Anne, but the two eras have a certain balance

which is agreeable to the imagination. We can scarcely help regretting that the great age of Wordsworth and Scott, Byron and Wellington should not have been deferred long enough to make our Victorian age the third noblest period of modern English history. But time has here balked us. This age is not without its own greatness, but it is not the next in natural sequence to that of Anne, as Anne's was to that of Elizabeth. In the reigns of both these queens the country was trembling between two dynasties, scarcely yet recovered from the convulsion of great political changes, and feeling that nothing but the life of the sovereign on the throne stood between it and unknown rulers and dangers to come. The deluge in both cases was ready to be let loose after the termination of the life of the central personage in the state. And in both cases it was upon the pivot of one and the same family that all national fortunes turned. The new and unfamiliar race which succeeded the elder queen—a race between which and England there had been war for many successive generations, the most prominent member of which had just been executed on an English scaffold for state necessities of England—a race that had succeeded but indifferently in its native home, and was altogether uncertain as to its adaptability for the greater throne—was in the days of Anne brought to a melancholy conclusion: the tragedy of its existence being summed up between, in due development and progression like a tale that is told.

A Scottish writer can scarcely speak without a regret, without a prejudice in favour of the unfor-

tunate Stewarts. The Jameses in Scotland were almost without exception on the better side. They did their best for their country against a fierce and rapacious nobility. Such amount of justice, wrong-redressing, right-doing as was possible in these tumultuous times came through them: they were gallant mediæval monarchs, heroes of romance, as well as in their way defenders of the right, kings of the commons, patriotic princes. That intimate knowledge which so often takes down heroic proportions, does not exist to lessen the grace of their old world knighthood. They were a handsome race, with much of that natural fascination which is as characteristic as features or complexion, and which made Queen Mary, who was not in reality much more lovely than her cousin Elizabeth, one of the beauties of the world. But these graceful and winning Stewarts were not made for England: their coming, their going, the struggle over them was fatal to all connected with them, and to their own honour and worth as well. They were ruined by their great fortune.

This was the danger, as yet an unknown one, that menaced England when all the glories of the national genius burst forth to render the firm standing-ground of that time of Elizabeth the best which England was to know for so long, splendid and memorable among the ages; and they too, though Anne was one of them, were the well comprehended danger which, after a lull and breathing-time of comparative national harmony, threatened again after her reign should be over. In both cases a thrill of risk and probable evil to come enhanced

the certainty of the moment. And especially in the days of Anne, no one knew what gulf the country might plunge into as soon as her mild personality was withdrawn. It might be that all this settled order of affairs, still so unwelcome to the minority, might fall into chaos again in a moment. Even supposing the Hanoverian succession safe, who could tell what figure those little Electors might cut upon the throne of Great Britain? They were a necessity, but a necessity not loved but hated: whereas, the exiled race, the unlucky Stewarts, had a lingering tenderness in their favour even among those who knew them to be impossible. Thus Anne's life and her time, like those of Elizabeth, were to her contemporaries the only piece of solid ground amid a sea of evil chances. What was to come after was clear to none.

In the midst of all the agitations of the period and all its exuberant life, the wars abroad, the intrigues at home, the secret correspondences, the plots, the breathless hopes and fears, the flutter of the court and the courtiers, the energy of life outside, it is half ludicrous, half pathetic, to turn to the central figure of all, Anne Stewart, a fat, placid, middle-aged woman, full of infirmities, with little about her of the picturesque yet artificial brightness of her time or of her race, and no gleam of reflection in her to answer to the wit and genius which have made her age so illustrious. A monarch, except when personally great, has the strangest fate in this respect. As long as he or she lives he is the conscious centre of everything, whose notice elates and elevates the greatest; but as soon as his day is

over, he becomes a mere image of state, visible among his courtiers only as some unthought-of lackey, or some faded gentleman, throws a ray of passing illumination upon him. The good things of their lives are thus almost unjustly counterbalanced by the insignificance of their position afterwards. Anne was one of the sovereigns who may without too great a strain of hyperbole be allowed to have been beloved in her day. She did nothing to repel the popular devotion. She was the best of wives, the most sadly disappointed of childless mothers. She made pecuniary sacrifices to the weal of her kingdom such as no king or queen of England had made before. And she was a Stewart, Protestant and safe, combining all the rights of the family with those of orthodoxy and constitutionalism without even so much offence as lay in a foreign accent. There was indeed nothing foreign about her, a circumstance in her favour which she shared with the other great English queens regnant who had preceded her. All those points made her popular, even it might be permissible to say beloved. If she had been indifferent to her father's deprivation, she had not at least shocked the popular feeling by any immediate triumph in succeeding him as Mary had done: and her mild Englishism was delightful to the people after grim William with his Dutch accent and likings. But the historians have not been kind to Anne. They have lavished ill names upon her: 'a stupid woman'—'a very weak woman'—'always governed blindly by some female favourite'; nobody has a civil word to say for her. Yet there is

a mixture of the amusing and the tragic in the appearance of this passive figure, seated in the midst of all that life and movement, with her one great friendship, her long anguish of motherhood, her hopes so often raised, so often shattered, her stifled family feeling, her profound and helpless sense of misfortune. There is one bright light in the picture, and only one, but that comes from one of the rarest and highest sentiments of humanity, the passion of friendship of which women are popularly supposed to be incapable, but which never existed in more complete and disinterested devotion than in the bosom of this poor queen. It is sad that it should have ended in disloyalty and estrangement: but curiously enough, it is not the breach of this close connection, but the friendship itself which has exposed Anne to the censure and contempt of all the biographers and historians. To an impartial mind, we think few things can be more interesting than the position of these two female figures in the foreground of English life. Their friendship brought with it no harm to England; no scandal such as lurks about the antechambers of kings, and has made the name of a favourite one of the most odious titles of reproach, could find footing in face of such a relationship; the contrast is perfect between the two, the development of human character as highly marked and distinct as if they had been the personages of a drama set forth for our instruction. Never was there a more brilliant figure than that of the great duchess, a woman more beloved and hated than any woman in a drama, holding a hero in her bonds on one side, and on the other

rousing to the height of adoration the mild and obtuse nature of her royal mistress, keeping her place amid all intrigues and oppositions, on no ground but that of her own faculties and qualities for many of the most remarkable years of English history, and defending herself with such spirit and eloquence when attacked, that her plea is as interesting and vivid as any contemporary story in which the reader himself may have been involved, and it is impossible to glance at it without taking a side with more or less vehemence in the antiquated quarrel. Such a woman, standing like a beautiful Ishmael with every man's hand against her yet fearing no man, and ready to meet every assailant, cannot fail to attract the eye amid the historical scenes which so seldom open up to exhibit anything so living, so imperious, so bold and free. That she has got little mercy and no indulgence, that all chivalrous sentiment has been mute in respect to her, and an angry ill-tongue becomes the endowment of every historian who names her name, rather adds to the interest than takes from it. Women in history, strangely enough, seem always to impart to the chronicle a certain heat of personal feeling to which their companions are not subject. Whether it is that the historian is impatient to find himself arrested by the troublesome personality of a woman, and that a certain resentment of her intrusion colours all his appreciation of her; or that her appearance naturally possesses an individuality which breaks the line, it is difficult to tell; but the calmest chronicler becomes a partisan when he treats of Mary and Elizabeth, and no one

can name Sarah of Marlborough without foaming at the mouth. To us the unfailing animation and spirit of the woman, the dauntless stand she makes, her determination not to be overcome, even the virulence of the opposition she raises, carry a grateful stir and commotion into the mind.

And art could not desire a more curious contrast than that of the figure by her side, with appealing eyes fixed upon her, a little bewildered, not always quick to understand, a woman born for far other uses, but exposed all her harmless life to that fierce light that beats upon a throne. For her part she has no defence to make, no word to say. Let them spend all their jests upon her, Anne knows no reply. Her slow understanding and want of perception give her a certain composure which in a queen answers very well for dignity; yet there is something whimsically pathetic, pitiful, incongruous in the fate which has placed her there, which can scarcely fail to soften the heart of the spectator. Her woman's tragedy had no utterance, and there are no romantic particulars about her to attract the lovers of the picturesque. Yet in the blank of her humble intellect she discharged not amiss the duties that were so much too great for her, and if she were disloyal to her friend in the end, that betrayal only adds another touch of pathos to the spectacle of helplessness and human weakness. It is only the favoured few of mankind who are wiser and better, not feebler and less noble, as life draws towards its end.

Anne was, like Elizabeth, the daughter of a subject. Her mother, Anne Hyde, the daughter of the great

EDWARD HYDE, EARL OF CLARENDON

*From an original engraving by David Loggan*

Clarendon, had no doubt been exposed to all the dangers of that moment of intoxication which followed the Restoration, when the young princes, newly returned, were the objects of worship everywhere. Historians have not hesitated to sneer at the prudence with which the young lady secured herself by marriage, when so many, fairer than she, were less scrupulous; a reproach which is something unfair, considering what would certainly have been said of her had she not done so. Curiously enough, however, her own father, whether in sincerity or pretence, seems at the moment to have been her most severe critic, exculpating himself with unnecessary energy from all participation in the matter, and declaring that, if it were true, 'the king should immediately cause the woman to be sent to the Tower, . . . and then that an Act of Parliament should immediately be passed for cutting off her head.' It would appear, however, from the contemporary narratives of Pepys and Evelyn that he was not so bad as his word, for he seems to have supported and shielded his daughter during the period of uncertainty which preceded the acknowledgment of her marriage, and to have shared in the general satisfaction afterwards. But this great marriage was not of much advantage to her family. It did not hinder Clarendon's disgrace and banishment, nor were his sons after him anything advantaged by their close relationship to two queens. The Duchess of York does not seem to have been remarkable in any way. She is said to have governed her husband, and she died a Roman Catholic, the first of the royal family to lead

the way in that fatal particular. There was an interval of three years between the girls. The elder was like the Stewarts, with something of their natural grace of manner. The younger was a fair English child, rosy and plump and blooming. In later life they became more like each other: but the chief thing they inherited from their mother was what is called in fine language 'a tendency to *embonpoint*' with, it is said, a love of good eating, which helped to ensure the other peculiarity.

The princesses were put under the charge of a most orthodox bishop, Compton, Bishop of London, a man of good family, and who had been a soldier before he was a priest, for their religious education. The other particulars of their training were so much less important that there seems no very clear information on the point, except that they had the benefit of the instruction of a well-known actress, identified as Mrs. Betterton by Colley Cibber, but vaguely named by more dignified authorities. Lord Dartmouth describes this as ordered by King Charles because of the very sweet and melodious voice possessed by his little niece Anne. In the more definite story we are told that Mrs. Betterton trained the princesses to take their part in a little court performance when Anne was but ten and her sister thirteen, which sounds more natural. The residence of the girls was chiefly at Richmond, where they were under the charge of Lady Frances Villiers, who had a number of daughters of her own, one of whom, Elizabeth Villiers, went with Mary to Holland, and was in some respects her evil genius. We have unfortunately

no court chronicle to throw any light upon the lively scene at Richmond, where in their quaint childish stateliness, dressed with as much stiffness as their mothers, this little bevy of girls grew up together, conning their divinity whatever other lessons there might be, taking the air upon the river in their barge, following the hounds in the colder season, for this robust exercise seems to have been part of their training. When their youthful seclusion was broken by such a great event as the Court Masque in which they played their little parts, Mrs. Blogge, the saintly beauty, John Evelyn's friend, Godolphin's wife, taking the chief character, in a blaze of diamonds; or that state visit to the city when King Charles in all his glory took the girls with him—no doubt the old parlours and galleries rang with the story for weeks after. Princess Mary, her mind perhaps beginning to own a little agitation as to royal suitors, would have other distractions; but as for the Lady Anne, no doubt it came to be her chiefest holiday when the young Duchess of York, her stepmother, came from town in her chariot, or perhaps by water in a great gilded barge breasting up the stream, to pay the young ladies a visit. For in the train of that princess was a young maid-of-honour, a delightful brilliant *espiègle*, full of spirit and wilfulness, bearing the undistinguished name of Sarah Jennings, but bringing with her such life and stir and movement as dispersed the dulness wherever she went.

There is no such love as a young girl's adoration for a beautiful young woman a little older than herself, whom she can admire and imitate and cling to, and

dream of with visionary passion. This was the kind of sentiment with which the little princess regarded the bright and animated creature who formed one of her young stepmother's train. Mary of Modena was really only a few years older than the girls at Richmond. They were all young together, accustomed to the perpetual gaiety of the court of Charles if kept apart from its licence, and surrounded by court gossip and all the quips and pranks of fashionable wit. Probably all this might sound heavy enough now if we had a chronicle of it, for fun is apt to evaporate like champagne, and that which pleases one age is very stale in the next; but it made the atmosphere gay in those days, and if the comfort was less, the surroundings, the splendour of dress and equipage, the pictorial effects of society, were much more brilliant than anything we are cognisant of. How every gazer in the streets would rush now to see one such lumbering coach as those which carried the court ladies on their commonest errands, or to watch half a dozen gentlemen vapouring about in their laced coats who were the most ordinary appearances at that time! The lovely English landscape at Richmond, the winding river appearing and disappearing in silver links among the trees, the great oaks and elms forming stately avenues, the little groups of children and growing girls in quaint stiff garments, brocade 'that would stand alone,' head-dresses mounting up to the skies, pattering with high-heeled shoes along the terraces with perhaps a black page-boy in gorgeous livery, the latest mode, in attendance, or sleek court-usher learned in the scandal of the times—affords

the prettiest scene. There sometimes would come perhaps Charles himself, a wolf among the lambs, concerning whom the wise virgins of the court made memorandums in their journals, 'Be sure never to talk to the king'; or James, not much less dangerous, but curbed and softened there by the presence of his children—revolving his darker schemes, but all unconscious of the part which these two blooming young creatures in their curls were to play in the perplexed and painful history of the next twenty years.

Tragedy stands darkling behind us often in the most simple combinations of common life, but seldom so perceptibly as in these historic chapters. The Duke of York was a kind father according to all information; indeed it must have been a hard-hearted man who would have been less than kind to the motherless girls too young to oppose his will, fair and sweet in their earliest bloom, who were his only living children. They were the heirs of England, but not with any oppressive certainty of heirship, for was not there a young wife by his side, smiling upon everybody, and restoring him to something of the standing and all the hopes of youth? The Lady Anne in particular, the rosy little princess, not clever like her sister, but with her pretty voice and good-tempered roundness, who could think of any tragic importance attaching to her? She was far down in the line of succession. Mary of Modena's children, yet unborn, and those which Nature, who could doubt, held in store for young Mary of England, as soon as a fit husband should be found for her, stood in visionary array between little Anne and any approach to the

crown. She would be left to hang upon the arm and bask in the smiles of her young stepmother's young lady-in-waiting, with many a laugh at the premature favouritism. 'We had used to play together when she was a child,' says the great duchess long after, in the curious book written in her old age with the bold title of 'An Account of the Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough,' which every historian quotes, but all revile, somewhat without reason it seems to us. 'She even then expressed a particular fondness for me. This inclination increased with our years. I was often at court, and the princess always distinguished me by the pleasure she took to honour me preferably to others with her conversation and confidence. In all her parties for amusement I was sure by her choice to be one.' We cannot help thinking that it was a proof of some discrimination on the part of the little princess, to choose thus early for her favourite friend one who, whatever were her faults, must have been the most brilliant, interesting, and amusing of companions. She for whom her great general sighed like a lovesick boy whenever he was absent from her, for whom some of the best men of the time entertained a constant friendship—what a refuge from the dulness of the ordinary world to have such an animated and dauntless comrade amid the superficial obsequiousness of the young court ladies, and the admonitory discourses of the elder ones, bent on reminding a little princess perpetually of her rank, and what was due to it! Upon no subject have historians more consistently railed and blasphemed, but for our own part it has always seemed to us one of the most charm-

ing episodes in history, if it had not come to so disagreeable an end.

Mistress Sarah was one of the actors in the masque above referred to. She was in the most intimate circle of the Duke of York's household, closely linked to all its members with that relationship which belongs only to a court, though every great household was in those days a court so far as this was concerned. The attendants of the royal household combined subordination and equality, service and freedom, in a way which is now impossible in any other rank. They were as good gentlemen as the king, yet subject to him by a sentiment which made it not only natural but necessary that they should be ready to sacrifice everything for him, even their lives. They were his closest friends, his counsellors, more near him than his nearest relations, yet always his servants. Could it be possible to establish such a relationship between ordinary masters and servants, what a gain would it not be! But there is neither equality enough, nor difference enough to afford any foundation for such a bond except in the surroundings of royalty. It is one of the fine things of the feudal system which we have lost along with the evil things.

No doubt it added immensely to the attraction which the bright and animated girl exercised over her playmates and companions that she had a romantic love-story, and at a period when marriages were everywhere arranged, as at present in continental countries, by the parents, had made a secret marriage, under the most romantic circumstances, with a young hero worthy, if ever man was, to rank among the paladins. He was

not an irreproachable hero: court scandal had not spared him. He was said to have founded his fortune upon the bounty of one of the shameless women of Charles's court. But the imagination of the period was not over delicate, and probably had he not become so great a man and acquired so many enemies we should have heard little of John Churchill's early vices. His sister, Arabella Churchill, has no glory to cover her shortcomings, but it is a curious instance of the sudden efflorescence now and then of a race, which neither before nor after is of particular note, that she should have been the mother of that one illegitimate Stewart who might, had he been legitimate, have changed the fortunes of the house, the Duke of Berwick. Had she, instead of Anne Hyde, been the Pamela of James's career, what a difference might that have made in history! Nobody had heard of the Churchills before: they have not been a distinguished race since. It is curious that they should have produced, all unawares, without special preparation or warning, the two greatest soldiers of the age.

This, however, is a digression. Young Churchill was attached to the Duke of York's service as Sarah Jennings was to that of the Duchess. He had served abroad with distinction. In 1672, when France and England, for once in a way, were allies against Holland, he had served under the great Turenne, who called him 'my handsome Englishman,' and vaunted his gallantry in a way which might have inspired even a less powerful genius. He was but twenty-two when he thus gave proofs of his future greatness; when he returned after

PRINCESS MARY

*From an etching by A. Mongin, in 'The Portfolio,' of a picture by Sir Peter Lely at Hampton Court*

various other exploits and resumed his court service, the young maid-of-honour, whom the little princess adored, attained a complete dominion over the spirit of the young soldier. There were difficulties about their marriage, for he had no fortune, and his provident parents had procured an heiress for him. How the girls must have followed every breathless event in this little drama, the quarrels, the reconciliations, the despair, Sarah's quick offence and blaze of passion at every hindrance, and the young colonel's devotion! One wonders whether Princess Anne had the high secret confided to her of the marriage, accomplished so privately that even the bride herself was not quite clear of the date, but in the presence of Mary of Modena herself, so that all was doubly right and honourable. Sarah, if the dates are correct, must have been eighteen at this period, and her little princess fourteen: at all events it must have been a delightful interruption to the dulness of Richmond to hear all about it when the Duchess of York came with her train, and the two girls could wander away together in some green alley, till the mother of the maids grew uneasy, and Lady Frances sent a page or an usher after them. Mary of Modena must have been a lover of romance and true love also, though her youth had fallen to such a gruesome bridegroom as James Stewart. For not only Sarah Jennings and her great general who was to have so great a hand in keeping that poor lady's son from his kingdom, but Mary Blogge and the statesman who was to rule England so wisely in the interests of the opposing side, were both married under the young

duchess's wing, secretly, she helping, planning, and sanctioning the secret. How many additional bitternesses this must have put into her cup when she sat, a shadow-queen at St. Germains, and all these people whom she had served and caressed were swaying the fortunes of England! And who can tell what tender recollections of his secret wedding and the sweet and saintly prude whom King James's young wife gave him, may have touched the soul of Godolphin in those hankerings after his old masters which moved him from time to time, great minister as he was, almost to the verge of treachery? His devotion to Mary of Este has been represented, it is true, in a less austere light, and his loves were more gross than romantic. The Churchills, it must be owned, showed little gratitude to their royal patroness.

When Princess Mary married and went to Holland with her husband, the position of the little princess at home became a more important one. She was now the only daughter of the royal house in England, although not even heiress-presumptive, and occasionally thrown back by the birth of a baby brother into almost insignificance. But the babies disappeared and the daughters of England remained in the front of affairs. Anne was not without some experiences of travel and those educational advantages which the sight of foreign countries are said to bring. She went to The Hague to visit her sister; she accompanied her father, sturdy little Protestant as she was, when he was in disgrace for his religious views, and spent some time in Brussels. When she was a child she had been in France with her

relations there, in the household of her aunt, the Duchess of Orleans, and under the care of her grandmother, Queen Henrietta Maria. From Brussels, when she was fifteen, she wrote to one of the ladies about the court a letter which has been preserved with just as much and as little reason as any other letter of a fifteen-year-old girl with her eyes about her. In this the young lady describes a ball she had seen, herself incognito, at which some gentleman danced extremely well, 'as well if not better than either the Duke of Monmouth or Sir E. Villiers, which I think is very extraordinary,' says the girl, no doubt serenely believing that the best of all things was to be found at home. She is a little at sea about her spelling, but that was common enough. 'As for the town, it is a great fine town,' says the Princess Anne. 'Methinks, though the streets are not so clean as they are in Holland, yet they are not as dirty as ours; they are very well paved and very easy—they onely have od smells.' This is a peculiarity which has long outlived her day; and it would seem to imply that England, even before the invention of sanitary science, was superior in this respect at least to the towns of the Continent. Any other information which we have about the princess is of the vaguest description. Miss Strickland embroiders this spare narrative with a vague love-story for which there seems only the faintest foundation. But at all events, Anne remained in the shade until she married, in 1683, George, Prince of Denmark, a perfectly inoffensive and insignificant person, to whom she gave during the rest of her life a faithful, humdrum, but unbroken attachment,

such as shows to little advantage in print, but makes the happiness of many a home. The marriage was another sacrifice to the Protestantism of England, and in this point of view pleased the people much. King Charles, glad in his cynical wisdom to satisfy the country by any act which cost him nothing, thought it 'very convenient and suitable.' James, unwilling but powerless, grumbled to himself that 'he had little encouragement in the conduct of the Prince of Orange to marry another daughter in the same interest,' but made no effort against it. The prince himself produced no very great impression one way or another, as indeed he was little fitted to do. 'He has the Danish countenance, blond,' said Evelyn in his Diary. 'Of few words, spoke French but ill, seemed somewhat heavy, but is reported to be valiant.' He had never any occasion to show his valour during his long residence in England, but many to prove the former quality, the heaviness, which was but too evident. But Anne herself was not brilliant, and she was made for friendship, not for passion in the ordinary sense of the word. She never seems to have been in the smallest way dissatisfied with her heavy honest goodman. He was fond of eating and drinking, but of no more dangerous pleasures; her peace of mind was fluttered by no rival, nor her feminine pride touched. Her attendants might be as seductive as they pleased, this sturdy stolid husband was immovable; and it is to be supposed that the princess found the advantage of this immunity from one of the thorns which were then planted in every other royal pillow.

Her marriage had another advantage. It gave her a

household and court of her own, and enabled her to secure to herself the companionship of her always beloved friend. 'So desirous was she,' says Duchess Sarah, 'of having me always near her, that upon her marriage with the Prince of Denmark in 1683, it was at her own earnest request to her father I was made one of the ladies of her bedchamber. What conduced to render me the more agreeable to her in this station was doubtless,' she adds, with candour, 'the dislike she conceived to most of the other persons about her: and particularly to the first lady of the bedchamber, the Countess of Clarendon, a lady whose discourse and manners could not possibly recommend her to so young a mistress; for she looked like a madwoman and talked like a scholar. Indeed her Highness's court was so oddly composed that I think it would be making myself no great compliment if I should say her choosing to spend more of her time with me than with any of her other servants did no discredit to her taste.' Lady Clarendon was the wife of the great Chancellor's son, and was the aunt by marriage of the princess, not always a very endearing relationship. She was not a great lady by birth, and though a friend of Evelyn's and a highly educated woman, might easily be supposed to be a little oppressive in a young household, where her relationship gave her a certain authority, and where it would be difficult for a grave matron to avoid something of the unpopularity of a duenna.

The prince was dull, the princess had not many resources. They settled down in homely virtue, close to the court, with all its scandals and gaieties, but not quite

of it, and nothing could be more natural than that Anne should eagerly avail herself of the always amusing, always lively companion who had been the chosen friend of her youth. The Churchills were a handsome and distinguished couple, young, ambitious, and brilliant, accustomed to court ways, and acquainted with all that was going on, the gossip and the wit, the *fin mot* of every political situation, the whispers of the antechambers. They brought their young mistress all the news, embellished by daring comments and criticisms sharply spiced with satire, seeing everything and hearing everything with keen young eyes and ears, and turning her dull spectatorship into the breathless observation of one who knew every turn of the great drama played before her eyes. They spared nobody, we may be sure, in their talk; they had nicknames for every prominent individual, and flashed their keen animadversions and lively chronicles of every day's proceedings over the heads of the uninitiated, as members of an exclusive coterie delight to do, keeping their princess always interested, always up to the current of affairs.

The Cockpit, which, undignified as it sounds, was the house chosen as Anne's residence, had been built as a royal playhouse, first for the sport indicated by its name, then for the more refined amusement of the theatre, but had been made into a private residence, and was bought by Charles II. for his niece on her marriage. It was exactly opposite to the palace of Whitehall, then a stately building, facing on one side to the river, as Somerset House does still, and of a similar order of architecture. The Cockpit is said to have been on the

CHARLES II.

*Miniature by S. Cooper, in the Royal Collection at Windsor*

other side of the existing street, opening from St James's Park. The young household was thus planted between the king's gay, crowded, luxurious and disorderly dwelling, and the more modest establishment of the Duke of York at St. James's Palace—witnessing from its windows all the comings and goings, the fine equipages, the court favourites, each with their train of flatterers, and every commotion of the most extravagant and lawless of royal houses. No doubt to hear Mrs. Churchill's lively satirical remarks upon all this, and the flow of her brilliant malice, and all her sharp commentaries, must have kept the house lively, and brightened the dull days and tedious waitings of maternity into which Anne was immediately plunged, drawing a laugh even from stupid George in the chimney corner. And there was this in it, to make the whole more piquant, that it was virtue, irreproachable, and no doubt pleasantly self-conscious of its superiority, which thus derived a keen amusement out of vice. The two young couples on the other side of the way were immaculate, devoted exclusively to each other, thinking of neither man nor woman save their lawful mates. The atmosphere of the time was not favourable to delicacy of mind. Probably neither the princess nor her lady were disgusted by gossip about the Portsmouths and Castlemaines, but took these ladies to pieces with indignant zest, and spared no gibe.

And though the remarks might be too broad for modern liking and the fun sometimes unsavoury, we cannot but think that amid the noisy and picturesque life, full of corruption, yet so gay and sparkling to the

spectator, of that wild Restoration era, this little household of the Cockpit forms one of the most attractive pictures. A fine young soldier, already the most distinguished of his age, and a beautiful lively young woman, overflowing with wit and energy, there was not in all Charles's court so splendid a couple as these young Churchills. And Anne was very young, in full possession still of that *beauté de diable* which so long as it lasts has its own charm. Along with her beauty of colour and freshness and youthful contour, she had a beautiful voice, the prettiest hands, and the most affectionate heart. If she was not clever, how little does that matter to a girl of twenty, taught by love to be receptive, and called upon for no effort of genius. Honest George was not much more than a background, but an inoffensive and amiable piece of still life, taking nothing upon him. If there was calculation in the steadfastness with which the abler pair possessed themselves of the confidence and held fast to the service of their royal friends, it would be hard to conclude that there was not some affection too—at least on the part of Sarah, who had known every thought of her little princess's heart since she was a child, and could not but be flattered and pleased by the love showered upon her. At all events in Anne there was no unworthy sentiment. Everything about her appeals to our tenderness. When she attained what seems to have been the summit of her desires and secured her type of excellence, the admired and adored paragon of her childhood, for her daily companion, the formal titles and addresses which her rank made necessary

became irksome beyond measure to the simple-hearted young woman, whose hard fate it was to have been born a princess. The impetuosity of her affection, her rush, so to speak, into the arms of her friend, her pretty youthful sentiment, so fresh and natural, her humility and simplicity are all pleasant to contemplate. Little more than a year after her marriage, after this close union had begun, she writes upon a temporary absence as follows:—

'If you will not let me have the satisfaction of hearing from you again before I see you, let me beg of you not to call me "your highness" at every word, but be as free with me as one friend ought to be with another. And you can never give me any greater proof of your friendship than in telling me your mind freely in all things, which I do beg you to do: and if ever it were in my power to serve you, nobody would be more ready than myself. I am all impatience for Wednesday: till when farewell.'

Upon this ensued a little sentimental bargain between the two young women. It was not according to the manners of the time that they should call each other Anne and Sarah: perhaps indeed the princess was not prepared to go so far; at all events it was not the mode of that artificial age. Had they been French they might have been Araminta and Dorinda after the fashion of the *Précieuses*, but the English form was different.

'She grew weary to be treated by me with the form and ceremony due to her rank; nor could she bear from me the sound of words which implied in them distance and superiority. It was this turn of mind which made her one day propose to me that whenever I should happen to be absent from

her, we might in all our letters write ourselves by feigned names, such as would impart nothing of distinction of rank between us. Morley and Freeman were the names her fancy hit upon, and she left me to choose by which of them I should be called. My frank, open temper naturally led me to pitch upon Freeman, and so the princess took the other: and from this time Mrs. Morley and Mrs. Freeman began to converse, as equals, made so by affection and friendship.'

No doubt these were the names in some young-lady book which had been in the young princess's childish library, something a generation before the *Spectator*, in which moral virtue and the sweet claims of friendship were the subject. Morley is one of the typical names which recall to us the literature of the eighteenth century, and no doubt it was taken from some early *avant-courier* of the instructive and sentimental romances that were to come. Mrs. Morley could be nothing less than the gentle *ingénue*, the type of modest virtue, and Freeman was of all others the title most suitable for Sarah the bright and brave. If the princess invented them it says a great deal more for her imagination than it has been supposed to deserve. The critics have not been able to contain themselves for angry ridicule of this little friendly travesty. To us it seems a pretty incident; the princess was twenty, the bedchamber woman twenty-four; their friendly traffic had not to their own consciousness attained the importance of an historical fact.

The spot in which all these things went on bore a very different aspect then from its appearance now. It is still to a stranger an impressive piece of street. Opposite the not very dignified archways in which a

splendid horse-guard in full panoply stands all day long, holding in his charger for the admiration of her Majesty's lieges, was bustling Whitehall, full of the most animated life and the greatest finery that has ever been in England, grand gilt coaches, such as survive only in the Lord Mayor's show, rumbling in and out from its gateways, groups of splendid persons coming and going, the king himself with all his dogs and his gentlemen, streaming across the road to his walk in the Mall in a glory of velvet and satin, point lace and gold. The doors were not closed as now by unsociable Lord Chamberlains, watching over the entries at Buckingham Palace, opening only for solemn functions. Everybody, or at least everybody who was anybody, was free to enter, to walk in the galleries where a royal group might be encountered at any moment, or the delighted spectator might look down upon the very presence-chamber itself and see the king receive an ambassador, or the queen in the evening sit down to basset, while all the court amused themselves in full view of the gazers. If such a fine sight were possible now it is to be feared that the well-dressed mob which pursues the royal footsteps wherever they go would make the life of the sovereign impossible altogether. But such was the custom in those days. Mr. Pepys 'carried my wife' into one of these galleries 'to see the Queen in her presence-chamber and the maydes of honour and the young Duke of Monmouth playing at cards;' and himself on another occasion got into the very ballroom, 'crammed with fine ladies, the greatest of the court' and beheld the

king with all the dukes dancing the Branle. 'The greatest pleasure,' he says, 'I could wish to see at court.' Mr. John Evelyn was a greater personage to whom all the ways of the court were open: but even to his equal in the present day it would not be possible to go in as he evidently did at his ease, without invitation, on that last Sunday evening of King Charles's life, into the midst of the scene of which he has left us so painful a sketch: 'The king sitting and toying with his concubines; a French boy singing love-songs in that glorious gallery, whilst about twenty of the great courtiers and other dissolute persons were at basset, round a large table, a bank of at least £2000 in gold before them.'

All this was going on opposite the house where the Princess Anne held her virtuous, mild little court, and watched the courtiers streaming out and in, with endless curiosity and amusement. But two years after her establishment there King Charles died. And then the scene changed; and it was the mass in the private chapel, and the presence here and there of somebody who looked like a Jesuit which alarmed the gazers, not the dissolute amusements of the court. James was not virtuous any more than his brother. One of the first acts which the excellent Evelyn, one of the best of men, had to do in the new reign, as one of the Commissioners of the Privy Seal, was to affix that imperial stamp to a patent by which one of the new king's favourites was made Countess of Dorchester: but James's immoralities were not his chief characteristics. He was a more dangerous king than his brother, who was merely selfish, dissolute, and

pleasure-loving. James was more. He was a bigoted Roman Catholic besides, bent on making up for all his peccadilloes by furthering his creed everywhere, and a strenuous believer in that old family doctrine of divine right which had already worked the Stewarts such deadly harm. He had been obliged to withdraw from the court two or three times in his brother's time, in consequence of the popular fear and suspicion of him: and no reign was ever begun under such gloomy auguries. Judging him from our present point of view, his first proceedings, except for the unconstitutional mode of doing them, do not appear very alarming. We have gone much further than James could have imagined possible in the way of abolishing tests and religious disabilities; but the mind of his time was very different. When the bishops refused to read the declaration of his will, it was upon the expressed ground that he had of himself no right to promulgate any law, or abolish without the consent of Parliament any existing enactment: but this was not the real motive of their conduct. It was not the assumption by the king of the power to act on his own authority which united the High Church Prelates with the bulk of the nation. It was what he did, not the way in which he did it, which set the country in flame. The mere thought that the door which had been so bolted and barred against Popery was now set open, filled all England with the wildest panic. The nation felt itself caught by the torrent which must carry it to destruction. Men saw the dungeons of the Inquisition, the fires of Smithfield before them, as soon as the proscribed

priest was re-admitted and mass once more openly said at an unconcealed altar. Never was there a more universal and all-influential sentiment. The terror, the unanimity, are things to wonder at. Sancroft and his bishops were not constitutionalists. The personal rule of the king had nothing in it that alarmed them; but the idea of the re-introduction of Popery moved them to a resistance which was in reality opposed to their tenets; and for the first time absolutely unanimous England was at their back.

When we take history piecemeal, and read it through the individual lives of the chief actors, we perceive with the strangest sensations of surprise that at this great crisis not one of these men was sure what he wanted or what he feared, or was even entirely sincere in his adherence to one party against another. They were the courtiers of James, and invited William—they were William's ministers, and kept up a correspondence with James. The best of them were not without a treacherous side. They were never certain which was safest, which would last, always liable to lend an ear to temptations from the other party, never sure that they might not to-morrow morning find themselves in open rebellion against the master of to-day. Yet while almost every individual of note was subject to this uncertainty, this confused and troubled vacillation, there was such a sweep of national conviction, so strong a current of the general will, that the supposed leaders of opinion were carried away by it, and compelled to assume and act upon a conviction which was England's, but which individually they did not possess. Nothing

can be more remarkable, or unexplainable under any other interpretation, than the way in which his entire court, statesmen, soldiers, all who were worth counting and so many who were not, abandoned King James—some with a sort of consternation, not knowing why they did it, drawn by a force they could not resist. No example of this can be more remarkable than that of Clarendon, who received the news of his son's defection to the Prince of Orange with what seems to be a heart-broken outcry, 'O God, that my son should be a rebel!' yet presently, ten days afterwards, is drawn away himself in a kind of extraordinary confusion like a man in a dream, like a subject of mesmeric influence, although in all the following negotiations he maintained James's cause as far as a man could who did not accept ruin as the consequence. Scarcely one of these men was whole-hearted or had any determined principle in the matter. But in the mass of the nation behind them there was a force of conviction, of panic, of determination, which carried them off their feet. The chief names in England appear little more than straws upon the current indicating its course, but forced along by its fierce sweep and impetus and not by any impulse of their own.

The Princess Anne occupied a different position from that of these bewildered statesmen. She shared to the fullest extent the convictions of the nation. She had been brought up in the straitest sect of her religion, Protestant almost more than Christian, a Church-woman above all. When one is capable of thinking about one's faith there is some reason to hope that one may at least believe in the thoughts of other people and

consider it possible that they in their own esteem, if not in any one else's, may be right, which is the only true foundation of toleration. But it is the people who believe without thinking, who receive what they are taught without exercising any judgment of their own upon it, and cling to it with a certainty that its least important detail is as necessary as its first principle, who furnish that *sancta simplicitas* which makes the cruellest persecution possible without turning the persecuting community into fiends and barbarians. Though her mother had been a Roman Catholic, and her father was one, and though many of her relations belonged to the old church, Anne was a Protestant of this unyielding kind. She was in herself as good a type of the England of the time as could have been found, much better than her abler and larger-minded advisers. The narrowness of her mind and the rigidity of her faith were beyond all reassurances of reason, all guarantees of possibility. She was as much dismayed by her father's determination to liberate and tolerate Popery as the least enlightened of his subjects. 'Methinks it has a very dismal prospect,' she wrote as early as 1686, only the year after James's succession. 'Attempts,' Lady Marlborough tells us, 'were made to draw his daughter into his designs. The king indeed used no harshness with her, he only discovered his wishes by putting into her hands some books and papers which he hoped might induce her to a change of religion: and had she had any inclination that way the chaplains about were such divines as could have said but little in defence of their own

JAMES II

*Illumination on a letter patent in the Public Record Office*

religion, or to secure her against the practices of Popery recommended to her by a father and a king.' This low estimate of the Princess's spiritual advisers is whimsically supported by Evelyn's opinion of Anne's first religious preceptor, Bishop Compton, of whom the courtly philosopher declared, after hearing a sermon from him, that 'this worthy person's talent is not preaching.'

But Anne required no preaching to stimulate her in her fear of Popery and narrow devotion to the Church, outside of which she knew of no salvation. No doubt her father's Popish tracts, things which in that age were held to possess many of the properties of the dynamite of to-day, scared the inflexible and unimaginative Churchwoman as much as if they had been capable of exploding and doing her external damage without any participation of hers. Her training, so wisely adapted to please the Protestant party, had probably been thought by her father and uncle to be a matter of complete indifference on any other ground; but in this they reckoned altogether without their princess. With both James's daughters the process was too successful. They feared Popery more than they loved their father, but so far as he had been responsible for their training, the fault was his own. There seems not the slightest reason to suppose that Anne was insincere in her anxiety for the Church, or that the panic which she shared with the whole country was affected or unreal. It is impossible that she could expect her own position to be improved by the substitution of her sister and her sister's husband for the father who had been always

kind to her. The Churchills, whose Church principles were not so undeniable, and whose regard for their own interest was great, are more difficult to divine: and yet it appears a harsh thing to refer their action to unworthy motives alone. It is supposed that they had some visionary plan, after the existing economy had been overturned by the help of William, of bringing in their princess by a side wind, and reigning, through her, over the startled and subjugated nation. But granting that such an imagination might have been conceived in the fertile and restless brain of a young and sanguine woman, it seems impossible to imagine that Churchill, a man of some experience in the world, and some knowledge of William, could for a moment have believed that the grave and ambitious prince who was so near the throne would have been persuaded or forced to waive his wife's claims, and those still more imperative ones which his position of deliverer gave him, in order to advance the fortunes of any one else, least of all the sister-in-law whom he despised. The Duke of York had advanced and caressed Churchill, and James, when king, was likely to do so with still greater power. Ingratitude is rarely wanton, it has some motive: and the simple hypothesis that Churchill and his wife shared the national sentiment, and feared Popery as the mass of their contemporaries did, with a sincere panic and conviction, is at least as reasonable as any other. The fact that he at once announced, immediately after James's accession, his determination not to go a step beyond his conscience, seems entirely in favour of this theory. Within these bounds he served James faith-

fully enough: he crushed the Monmouth insurrection as a man might crush a butterfly; but he stood apart from all the hasty proceedings of the Court, and showed no courtier-like subservience when James revealed his secret purpose.

As these purposes began to develop, no doubt there was many an excited discussion in the Cockpit over the state of affairs. When the crisis came to the worst we have glimpses of anxious statesmen, Lord Clarendon among them, going again and again with troubled faces to entreat Anne to 'speak to' her reckless father, and convince him of the terrible mistake he was making, a request which the young lady rejected with great alarm, saying, no doubt with perfect reason, that it neither became her to do so, nor would her father pay any attention to her. But before affairs went so far it is impossible to doubt that all the indications of the rising storm were studied and discussed in the household which was so nearly concerned in it whatever might happen. Bishop Compton, a most confidential adviser, one of the seven bishops whose trial convulsed the country, was one, also, of those who had signed the invitation to William; and Dykvelt, the Dutch ambassador, who, no doubt, had been the medium of many a communication between the sisters, would aid in keeping so interested a looker-on *au courant*. The little court of Anne watched with dismay, yet hope, the excitement of the Churchmen's rebellion against the divine right they had once so steadfastly upheld, and all the hurrying steps by which James made it clear that he was on the way to ruin. What the sentiments

were that moved herself and her advisers, may be seen from the following letter, written nearly a year and a half before William's landing, and addressed to him by Churchill:—

'The Princess of Denmark having ordered me to discourse with Monsieur Dykvelt (the Dutch envoy), and to let him know her resolutions so that he might let your highness and the princess her sister know, that she was resolved by the assistance of God to suffer all extremities, even to death itself, rather than be brought to change her religion,—I thought it my duty to your highness and to the princess-royal, by this opportunity of Monsieur Dykvelt, to give you assurances under my own hand, that my place and the king's favour I set at nought in comparison of being true to my religion. In all things but this the king may command me: and I call God to witness that even with joy I should expose my life for his service, so sensible am I of his favours. I know the troubling you, sir, with thus much of myself, I being of so little use to your highness, is very impertinent, but I think it may be a great ease to your highness and the princess, to be satisfied that the Princess of Denmark is safe in the trusting of me, I being resolved, although I cannot live the life of a saint, if there be ever occasion for it, to show the resolution of a martyr.'

In these days it is easy to smile at Anne's determination to face 'even death itself' rather than change her religion, and at Churchill's eloquent declaration of his own readiness to offer himself to martyrdom. But they took it no more seriously than the nation did. There was nothing mock-heroic in such professions to the excited imagination of the day. It is likely enough that Churchill knew he could not be called upon for any such sacrifice, and had a tolerably clear perception

of the way in which to prevent it, but yet a very little matter might have baffled all his calculations, and left him at the mercy of the king.

When everything was thus at the point of explosion, an event occurred, which in other circumstances might have exercised a happy influence, but which was so foolishly treated and talked of by the chief actors in this great drama of fate that it brought the popular passion to a climax. Mary of Modena, James's queen, was still young, and he himself was little over fifty. There was nothing unnatural, nor even unlikely, in the fact that after an interval of five years she should bear another child following upon several short-lived infants born in the first years of her marriage. But the priests who surrounded her, and anxious politico-religious adherents of the proselytising party, had the folly to treat this event as half miraculous, a special interposition of God, and to express their certainty beforehand that this was to be the long-hoped-for Prince of Wales, the heir-male who should revive the line. The idea that the child was supposititious and its birth a criminal fiction, which was suggested by all these confident prophecies and ill-timed exultations, seized upon the excited nation, ready to believe any harm of a Papist, and especially of a Jesuit. The princess believed it like all the rest of the world, and perhaps with more warmth even than the general public, seeing her own personal rights were in question, and it is certain that she did not express herself prettily on this subject. Were we to reproduce her language now, it would be revolting to all ears: and it is difficult to imagine a

gentlewoman, not to say a young princess, using such expressions. But nobody was astonished in those days, when speech was plainer than it is now. Afterwards, when the national ferment cooled down, and the passion of alarm and rage passed over, it was universally, if tacitly, allowed that there was no real foundation for the popular belief; but at the moment it was universal. The Princess Anne, poor lady, was herself constantly in the position which her young stepmother was supposed to be feigning, and in the innocent indecency, which was thought no harm at the time, expressed her astonishment that she had not, a matron herself, and already so deeply experienced in matters of the kind, been taken into the closest confidence on so important a subject. Perhaps Mary of Modena was more modest than her age—Anne was not so. It is indeed half ludicrous, half pathetic, in the midst of all the tumults and confusion of the time, to note the constant allusions to the princess's condition which recur whenever she is mentioned: there were always reasons why it should be specially cruel to disturb her, and her state had constantly to be taken into account. How deeply this must have added to her tremors in a time so dangerous for England, and how natural it was in such circumstances that she should more and more cling to her stronger friend and find no comfort out of her presence, it is needless to say. 'Whatever changes there are in the world, I hope you will never forsake me, and I shall be happy,' she writes during this period of excitement and distress. She herself was weak, and not very wise. In a sudden emergency neither she nor her husband

were good for much. They could carry on the routine of life well enough, but when unforeseen necessities came they stood helpless and bewildered; but Lady Churchill was quick of wit and full of inexhaustible energy. To her it was always given to know what to do.

It is unnecessary to enter into the history of the Revolution. It is the great modern turning-point of English history, and no doubt it is the reason why we have been exempted in latter days from those agitations of deadly debate and bloody revolution which have shaken all neighbouring nations. Glorious and happy, however, scarcely seem to be fit words to describe this extraordinary event. A more painful era does not exist in history. There is scarcely an individual in the front of affairs who was not guilty of treachery one time or another: they betrayed each other on every hand, they were perplexed, uncertain, full of continual alarms. The king who went away was a gloomy bigot, the king who came was a cold and melancholy alien. Neither of them understood the country they ruled, or had any power of drawing to themselves the hearts of the people. After the volcanic effort by which the change was made, a chill came over the country. There were many who thought in their disappointment when the Dutch king proved himself so little sympathetic, when he surrounded himself with his Dutchmen, and gave to them the chief prizes in his power, that perhaps after such a lesson James must have learned wisdom, and that it might be better to have him back again. Queen Mary's unseemly delight in taking possession of White-

hall, of which so much has been said, is almost the only exhibition of pleasure which is to be found in all these dreary records of deceit and treachery. The part which the ladies at the Cockpit played brings the hurry and excitement of the moment to a crisis. They had to wait and watch as women generally have when the course of events was at its height, with couriers coming and going, and their nerves strung to the highest pitch.

When the report came that Lord Feversham had begged of James 'on his knees two hours' to order the arrest of Churchill, Mrs. Freeman must have flung her handsome head high, yet not without a quiver of alarm lest her soldier should have paused an hour too long before taking the final step, so long anticipated and so inevitable: while the faithful Morley wept, yet tried to emulate her courage, wondering in her excitement what her own heavy prince was doing, and eager for William's advance, which somehow or other must mean peace and quiet. That heavy prince meanwhile was moving about with the perplexed and unhappy king, uttering out of his blond moustache, with an atrocious accent, his dull wonder, '*Est-il possible?*' as every new desertion was announced; then mounting heavily one evening after dinner, warmed and encouraged by a good deal of King James's wine, and, riding through the cold and dark, in his turn deserting too. When this event happened the excitement at the Cockpit was overwhelming. The princess was 'in a great fright.' 'She sent for me,' says Lady Churchill, 'told me her distress, and declared that rather than see her father she would jump out of the window.' King James was coming back to London,

sad and wroth, and perhaps the rumour that he would have her arrested lent additional terrors to the idea of encountering his angry countenance. But this is not needed to explain the princess's action. It cannot be supposed that her husband's desertion was accidental or that she was not aware of its likelihood to say the least, but her nervous alarm when the event really occurred is comprehensible enough, and her desire to shun her father's presence. Lady Churchill went immediately to the Bishop of London, Compton, the princess's former tutor and devoted friend, who was no doubt prepared for the emergency, and who took measures instantly to secure her flight. And that night, after her attendants were in bed, Anne rose in the dark, and with her beloved Sarah's arm and support stole down the backstairs to where in the November night the bishop, in a hackney coach, was waiting for her. Other princesses in similar circumstances have owned to a thrill of pleasure in such an adventure. Perhaps she breathed the freer when she was safely out of the palace where King James with his dark countenance might have come any day to demand from her an account of her husband's behaviour, or to upbraid her with her own want of affection. Anyhow the sweep of the current had now reached her tremulous feet, and no more than another was she capable of resisting it.

Anne's position was very much changed by the Revolution, and if any ambitious hopes had been entertained or plans formed by her household, they were very speedily and very completely brought to an end. The dull royal pair with their two brilliant guides and

counsellors found themselves in front of another couple of very different mark: the serious, somewhat gloomy, determined and self-concentrated Dutchman, and the new Queen Mary, a person far more attractive and imposing than Anne, whom from a not very happy bride he had managed so to appropriate and attract to himself that a wife more devoted, a love more impassioned, is scarcely to be found in history. William belongs to larger annals and a history more important than these sketches. He is not to be judged solely by his connection with England, momentous as that was. His mind and habits had been formed in another sphere, and he was in full maturity of both before he was called upon to interfere in the affairs of a country with which he had no tender associations, and which he judged coldly as a stranger. He was a man of the greatest faculties, and capable, it is evident, of inspiring the warmest devotion. He himself loved his wife and his friends with a steady and enduring affection. A man must have high personal qualities of whom this can be said. But his heart and all his amiable qualities were concentrated in this narrow sphere, and he had no general friendliness, no smiling accost, no charity for the masses. All the clouds that bodily suffering is apt to bring about the soul hung over him. He had none of that robust satisfaction in everything that was his, that makes life so much easier to the happily gifted. His temper was that of a sickly man, his manners those of one accustomed all his life to see everything give way to him. He was cold and arbitrary, indifferent to the feelings of others, and far more interested in other pursuits and

objects than in the country to which he had become necessary, and which on that very ground he could scarcely fail to half despise. Mary was of a very different nature. She had the winning ways and genial grace of her family, and won the hearts of the wider common circle in an easy enthusiasm. She was herself on the surface easily pleased, excited by novelty, and delighted to come back as mistress to the high places which in her youth had embodied all ideas of splendour and greatness to her mind. Both friends and foes have remarked upon her pleasure in taking possession of Whitehall, her eager rush on the morning after her arrival to examine everything, and delighted appropriation of the apartments which her father and his family had so recently left. Bishop Burnet, shocked like the rest, gives the curious excuse that William had urged upon her the necessity of putting on an air of satisfaction, and that in her anxiety to please him she overdid her part. But no one remembers that Mary had never seen her father or stepmother in these rooms, that her only association with them must have been the memory of her uncle and his favourites, of whose evil recollection it must have been well in every way to cleanse them. This apology for her seems to be more valid than the other; but the fact of her real pleasure in the novelty, her readiness to smile and recommend herself to the popular appreciation, her easy amiability and winning manners, seem without dispute.

When we turn the leaf, however, and find ourselves in the midst of Mary's own revelation of herself, the mystery of her being comes upon us almost with pain,

though nothing is disclosed that is not honourable to her. This gracious royal lady, with her ready smiles and facile grace, was a woman possessed by one absorbing passion, in reality living alone, amid all her admiring courtiers caring for neither man nor woman save the husband to whom she had given her entire devotion —a woman without a friend, opening her heart to no one but him, parentless, childless, companionless, with in all the world nothing that moved her but the thought of a man who spent most of his time away from her, and who, though he loved her, had been unfaithful to her. Mary's letters are beautiful and touching; they are full of traces of intelligence, and fine sense and political ability: but the wonderful thing in them is their disclosure of a being entirely isolated, open to no sentiment and no sympathy save one. It is one of the highest recommendations, yet at the same time one of the least attractive aspects of marriage, that such a development is not unique, perhaps even, if we could know more universally, not uncommon. It is the painful side of that command to 'forsake father and mother and cleave unto' the partner of one's individual life. There was for Mary no relationship in the world but this one. It is almost a mistake to blame her for her shortcomings in other duties, for she was not conscious of them, her whole soul with all its affections being given to this. William repaid her after a sort; he admired her and trusted her, and understood what it was to possess such a representative and deputy: and when she died, it may almost be said without exaggeration that his heart was broken. For this we may for-

give him his harsh speeches to her, his infidelities, his careless mastership: while with stronger reason we may forgive her all her insensibilities of nature, for the sake of love so transcendent that it absorbed her every faculty, and made every individual power of her being into a happy slave and contented bondservant for him.

Two persons so remarkable threw into the shade even Churchill and Sarah, much more good Anne and George. We have no reason to suppose that Mary entertained any particular sentiment towards her sister, from whom she had been entirely separated for the greater part of her life, and the history of their relations is a painful one from beginning to end. No doubt the queen regarded her sister's household with the contempt which a woman with so entirely different a code would naturally entertain for a family in which the heads were so lax and secondary, the counsellors so prominent. Mary would be the last person in the world to understand the feeling with which Anne regarded her friend. She had herself made use of their influence at the time when it was all-important to secure every power in England for William's service, but a proud distaste for the woman whom the princess treated as her equal soon arose in the bosom of the Queen. The Churchills, however, served the new sovereigns signally by persuading the princess to yield her own rights, and consent to the conjoint reign and to William's life sovereignty, no small concession on the part of the next heir, and one which only the passive character of Anne could have made to appear insignificant. Had she

been a stronger and more intellectual woman, this act would have borne the aspect of a magnanimous and noble sacrifice to the good of the country, of her own interests and those of her children. As it was, her self-renunciation has got but little credit either then or now, and it has been considered rather an evidence of the discretion of the Churchills than of the generosity and patriotism of the princess. These perhaps are rather large words to use in speaking of Anne; but it must be remembered that a narrow mind is usually not less but more tenacious of personal honour and advantage, and that the dimmer an understanding may be, the less is it accessible to higher reason and noble motive. This sacrifice accomplished, however, there commenced a petty war between Whitehall and the Cockpit, in which perhaps Mary and Lady Churchill, now Marlborough, were the chief combatants, but which from henceforward, until her sister's death, became the chief feature in Anne's life. Continued squabbling is never lovely, even when it is between queens and princesses; but in this case the injured person has had so little justice, and the offender so many partisans, that it may not be amiss to make Anne's side of the question a little more apparent.

And here we come for the first time fully in sight of the great duchess as set forth by her own pen. The book already referred to, which was prepared late in her life, long after her queen had forsaken her and her power was over, furnishes us with the most lively picture of her actions and motives. That it should naturally represent these in the very best light, and that

every detail should be so skilfully arranged as to tell to the advantage of the narrator, is what every reader will expect to find. A statement of this description generally betrays itself by too great plausibility and deceives no one; but though volumes have been written to disprove it, and Lord Macaulay describes it as a tissue of lies, he is himself obliged to have recourse to it repeatedly, and no historian of the period can dispense with this vivid and brilliant story, which, notwithstanding its high tone of self-assertion, and the writer's evident admiration of her own supreme part, affords us the only picture we have of one of the most exciting episodes of the time. It is somewhat droll to contemplate her in the character of an *ingénue* and innocent believer in human nature, which is the first pose in which she exhibits herself. William of Orange, as everybody knows, had published a declaration on first setting foot in England, describing his expedition as entirely disinterested, and disclaiming all intention of becoming a candidate for the throne. There is a curious conversation recorded between Bentinck and Lord Clarendon, in which both these statesmen gravely discuss the question on this hypothesis, Bentinck declaring that 'though there are not ill men wanting who give it out that the prince aspires to the crown,' no insinuation could be more wicked; while Clarendon, more surprised than reassured, answers vaguely that in that case everything will be easy. But there was at least one guileless spectator, according to Lady Churchill, who believed the Dutchman. 'I do solemnly protest,' she says, 'that if there be truth in any mortal, I was so simple a creature that I

never dreamt of his being king, having never read, nor employed my time in anything but playing at cards, and, *having no ambition myself*, I imagined that the Prince of Orange's sole design was to provide for the safety of his own country by obliging King James to keep the laws of ours: that there was no sort of difficulty in the execution of this design, and that to do so much good would be a greater pleasure to him than to be king of any country upon earth. I was soon taught the world better.'

This pretty simplicity, and the humbleness of the author's feminine intelligence, sweetly conscious of its incapacity to judge, and of the disadvantages of never having read, or studied any subject more important than cards, as well as the astounding description of her as 'having no ambition myself,' will amuse the reader, though it infuriated her contemporaries who knew the lady, and still awakens more rage than amusement in the bosom of the serious historian who makes little allowance for the pleasant wiles of the autobiographist. Sarah Churchill (by this time Countess of Marlborough) was no *ingénue* at any time of her history, and her assumption of simplicity would not deceive the most credulous reader. She was an imperious woman, carrying everything with a high hand, not too respectful either of her royal mistress or of her great general, whom she has the credit of having ruled as she ruled Anne; but though this innocent aspect of wonder sits oddly upon her, it is one of the cleverest and keenest shafts which could have been launched at the pretences not less transparent on the other side, and does not

invalidate one of the facts of the case. And though she evidently was the chief cause of embroiling Anne with her sister, it can scarcely be believed that the princess's case would have been more satisfactory had she been left in her helplessness to the tender mercies of William, and entirely dependent upon his kindness; which must have happened had there been no bold and strong adviser in the matter. There was no generosity in the treatment which Anne received from the royal pair. She had made a sacrifice to the security of their throne which deserved some grace in return, but she did not receive any. Her innocent fancy for the palace at Richmond, where the sisters had been brought up together, was not indulged, and the squabblings about her lodgings at Whitehall were undignified on both sides, though it is quite possible that it was she who was in the wrong. But she cannot be said to have been in the wrong in the next question which occurred, which was the settlement of her own income. This she had previously drawn from her father, as was the custom in the royal family, and James had always been liberal and kind to her. But it was a different thing to depend upon the somewhat grudging hand of an economical brother-in-law, who had a number of foreign dependants to provide for, and a great deal to do with the money granted to him. He alarmed his friends on this point at once by a remark which he made to Clarendon as to what the princess could want with so large an income as thirty thousand a year, and he does not seem at any time, or in any particular, to have shown consideration for her. Perhaps the Churchills were afraid that

their mistress would be less able than usual to help and further their own fortunes, as is universally alleged against them ; but had they been the most disinterested couple in the world, it would still in all probability have appeared to them a duty to secure her against any caprice of the new king who had no right to be the arbiter of her fate. Lady Marlborough's strenuous action to bring the question to the decision of Parliament was nothing less than her mistress's interest demanded. And the sense of the country was so far with this; that the princess's income was settled with very little difficulty upon a liberal basis, than which—considering that she and the children of whom she was every year becoming the mother were the only acknowledged heirs of the throne—nothing could be more natural or just.

But the king and queen did not see it in this light. 'Friends! what friends have you but the king and me?' Queen Mary asked, with indignation. It is not to be supposed that she meant any harm to her sister, and perhaps it is not unnatural that Anne's objection to complete dependence upon herself should not have commended itself to her mind. But nothing is more curious than the strength of party feeling which makes Lord Macaulay defend the somewhat petty attitude of his favourite monarch on this occasion. Anne had fully proved her capacity to consider the public weal above her own ; and it was unworthy of William even to wish to keep in the position of a hanger-on a woman who had so greatly promoted the harmony of his own settlement. Parliament finally voted her a revenue of fifty

thousand a year, as a sort of compromise between the thirty thousand which King William grudged to her, and the unreasonably large sum which some of her supporters hoped to obtain; but the king and queen never forgave her, and still less did they forgive her advisers, for what they chose to consider a want of confidence in themselves. Lady Marlborough, it is not denied, was the leading spirit of the whole transaction. It was she who pushed her mistress's claims, and who used every possible means to *faire valoir* her previous self-renunciation and services to the State. 'I employed all the powers I was capable of exerting to advance the design,' she herself says. And no impartial reader will think that she did wrong. It was a bold thing to do in face of a king not easily to be contradicted and a queen who had taken up the matter as a personal offence. Anne insisted upon giving her prime minister and champion an allowance of a thousand a year when the matter was settled, and was always generous to her; but it cannot be said that any such reward was undeserved.

Here, however, began a series of struggles with the Court which were both undignified and unseemly, especially on the part of the king and queen, both of whom were cleverer persons than Anne. The quarrels over the princess's lodgings have already been referred to. Then came another as to the desire of Prince George of Denmark to go to sea with the fleet. The king treated him with scant ceremony when he accompanied him to Ireland, but Anne's husband still longed to have a finger in the pie. One does not see what harm the inoffensive prince, who had enjoyed the reputation of being valiant

when he came to England, could have done, and his desire to do some work for England was creditable at least. But it is comprehensible enough that William should have been impatient of incapables, and the permission was absolutely denied to him. In all these claims and refusals the position of Lady Marlborough as the princess's right hand had been completely acknowledged by Queen Mary and her husband, who had indeed conducted secret negotiations with her to induce her to moderate Anne's claims, and to persuade her into compliance with their wishes. 'She [the queen] sent a great lord to me to desire I would persuade the princess to keep the prince from going to sea, and this I was to compass without letting the princess know it was the queen's desire. . . . After this the queen sent Lord Rochester to me to desire much the same thing. The prince was not to go to sea, and this not going was to appear his own choice.' Similar attempts were made in the matter of the allowance. And it is easy to imagine that Mary, a queen who was not without some of the absolutism of the Stewart mind, became more and more exasperated with the bold woman who thus held up her sister's little separate court and interest, and was neither to be frightened nor flattered into subservience. And very likely this little separate court was a thorn in the side of the royal pair, keeping constant watch upon all their actions, maintaining a perpetual criticism, no doubt levelling many a jibe at the Dutch retainers, and still more at the Dutch master. Good-natured friends even in the capacity of courtiers were no doubt found to whisper in the presence-chamber

itself the witticisms with which Sarah of Marlborough would entertain her mistress—utterances not very brilliant perhaps, but sharp enough; and it would not sweeten the temper of the queen if she found out that her great William was known as Caliban in the correspondence of Mrs. Morley and Mrs. Freeman. A hundred petty irritations always come in in such circumstances to increase a breach, and the situation was strained and uneasy in every way. What the precise occurrence was that brought about the final explosion is not known, but one day after a stormy interview, during which the queen had demanded the dismissal of Lady Marlborough from her sister's household, an event occurred which took away everybody's breath.

This was the sudden dismissal, without reason assigned, at least so far as the public knew, of Lord Marlborough from all his offices. He was lieutenant-general of the army, and he was a gentleman of the king's bedchamber. Up to this time there had been nothing apparent to find fault with in his conduct. William was too good a soldier himself not to appreciate his military talents, and he had behaved with good taste at least, in public matters. Except in the great fact of his desertion of James, and the aid which his powerful presence and influence had lent to the bloodless victory of the Prince of Orange, Marlborough had shown no hostility towards his old master. In the Convocation he had voted for a regency; and when it became inevitable to accept William's terms unconditionally and receive him as king, he had refrained from voting altogether. He had served with great

distinction abroad in William's service, but would not take part in Ireland, until James had withdrawn from that kingdom, thus refraining from bearing arms actually against his former sovereign. After this, however, he had taken command of the English forces, and accomplished his campaign with his usual energy and success. In short, his public aspect up to this time would seem on the face of it to have been irreprochable. This being the case, his sudden dismissal from court filled his friends with astonishment and dismay. Nobody understood the why or wherefore. 'An incident happened which I unwillingly mention,' says Bishop Burnet, 'because it cannot be told without some reflection on the memory of the queen, whom I always honoured beyond all the persons I have ever known.' This regretful preface seems to afford some guarantee for the bishop's sincerity; but Lord Macaulay disingenuously omits his statement of the case altogether while quoting passages from the unpublished MS. which seemed to support his own views. 'The Earl of Nottingham,' Burnet continues, 'came to the Earl of Marlborough with a message from the king telling him that he had no more use for his services, and therefore he demanded all his commissions. What drew so sudden and hard a message was not known; for he had been with the king that morning, and had parted with him in the ordinary manner. It seemed some letter was intercepted that gave suspicion; it is certain that he thought he was too little considered, and that he had upon many occasions censured the king's conduct and reflected on the Dutch.' Lord Macaulay, contradicting without explanation the

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*From the picture by J. Closterman in the National Portrait Gallery*

account thus given by the writer, of all others most likely to know the best that was to be said for William, assures his readers that the real ground of the dismissal had been communicated to Anne on the previous night (notwithstanding that the great general had been privileged to put on the king's shirt next morning as if nothing had happened), and was in reality a truly imperial plot for James's restoration conceived by Marlborough, and in which the princess herself was implicated. The plot in question, had it ever come to anything, was a most subtle one. It was said to be Marlborough's intention to move in the House of Lords an address to William requesting him to dismiss the foreign servants who surrounded him, and of whom the English were bitterly jealous. This scheme of reprisals had a certain humour in it, and trenchant reversal of the position, which looks as if Sarah herself had some hand in its construction, if it ever existed. William was as little likely to give up Bentinck and Keppel as Anne was to sacrifice the friends whom she loved, and a breach between the Parliament and the king would have been, it was hoped, the natural result—to be followed by a *coup-d'état* in which James might be replaced under stringent conditions upon the throne. The sole evidence for this plot is King James himself, who describes it in his diary. Lord Macaulay adds that 'it is strongly confirmed by Burnet'; but this we take leave to think is not the case. At the same time there seems no reason to doubt King James, who adds that this admirable plan was defeated by the indiscreet zeal of certain of his own most faithful supporters, who feared that

Marlborough, were he once master of the situation, would put Anne on the throne instead of her father.

Whether this plot was or was not the reason of Marlborough's dismissal, it is clear enough that he had resumed a secret correspondence with the banished king at St. Germains, whom not very long before he had deserted for William. But so had most of the statesmen who surrounded William, and even the admiral in whose hands the fate of England at sea was soon to be placed. The sins of the others were winked at, while Marlborough was thus made an example of—and the reader will ask why? Perhaps because Marlborough was a more dangerous agent than any of them: perhaps because he had involved the princess in his treachery, persuading her to send a letter and make overtures of friendship to her father. It is possible that it was this very letter of which Burnet says that it was intercepted, enclosed no doubt in one of Marlborough's of more distinct utterance. Here is Anne's mild performance, a thing not likely in itself to do either good or harm:—

'I have been very desirous of some safe opportunity to make you a sincere and humble offer of my duty and submission to you, and to beg you will be assured that I am both truly concerned for the misfortune of your condition, and sensible as I ought to be of my own unhappiness. As to what you may think I have contributed to it, if wishes could recall what is past, I had long since redeemed my fault. I am sensible it would have been a great relief to me if I could have found means to have acquainted you earlier with my repentent thoughts, but I hope they may find the advantage of coming late—of being less suspected of insincerity than

perhaps they would have been at any time before. It will be a great addition to the ease I propose to my own mind by this plain confession, if I am so happy as to find that it brings any real satisfaction to yours, and that you are as indulgent and easy to receive my humble submissions as I am to make them in a free, disinterested acknowledgment of my fault, for no other end but to deserve and receive your pardon.'

This is the sort of letter which would raise the smouldering dislike and hostility at Whitehall to the point of explosion, but would give little satisfaction where it was sent. A disinterested acknowledgment of a fault for no other end but to deserve and receive pardon, would be but a poor compliment to the anxious banished court at St. Germains. To say so much, yet to say so little, is a thing which must have taxed the powers of the wisest conspirators. But there can be little doubt that a penitent princess, thus ready to implore her father's pardon, would be a powerful auxiliary with the country, just then in the stage of natural disappointment which is prone to follow a great crisis; and that Marlborough was doubly dangerous with such a card in his hand to play.

A little pause occurred after Marlborough's dismissal. The court by this time had gone to Kensington, out of sight and hearing of the Cockpit, Whitehall having been burned in the previous year. The princess continued, no doubt in no very friendly mood, to go to the suburban palace in the evenings and make one at her sister's game of basset, showing by her abstraction, and the traces of tears about her eyes, her state of depression yet revolt. But about three weeks after that great event, something suggested to Lady Marlborough the

idea of accompanying her princess to the royal presence. It was strictly in her right to do so, in attendance on her mistress, and perhaps it was considered in the family council at the Cockpit that such a state of affairs could not go on, and that it was best to end it one way or another. One can imagine the stir in the antechamber, the suppressed excitement of the drawing-room, when the princess, less subdued than for some weeks back, her eyes no longer red, nor the corners of her mouth drooping, came suddenly in out of the night with a well-known, buoyant, and erect figure towering after her, proud head thrown back and eyes aflame, her mistress's train upon her arm, but the air of a triumphant general on her countenance. There would be a pause of consternation—and for a moment it would seem as if Mary, thus defied, must burst forth in wrath upon the culprits. What glances must have passed between the court ladies behind their fans, what whispers in the corners: the queen in the midst, pale with anger, restraining herself with difficulty, the princess perhaps beginning to quake, but Sarah undaunted, knowing no reason why she should not be there, 'since to attend the princess was only paying my duty where it was owing'! But next morning brought, as they must have foreseen it would bring, a royal missive meant to carry dismay and terror, in which Mary commanded her sister to dismiss her friend and make instant submission. 'I tell you plainly, Lady Marlborough must not continue with you in the circumstances in which her lord is,' the queen wrote; 'never anybody was suffered to live at court in my Lord Marlborough's

circumstances.' There is nothing undignified in Mary's letter. She was in all respects more capable of expressing herself than her sister, and she had so far right on her side that Lady Marlborough's appearance at Court was little less than a deliberate insult to her. 'I have all the reason imaginable to look upon your bringing her as the strangest thing that ever was done, nor could all my kindness for you have hindered me showing you that moment: but I considered your condition, and that made me master myself so far as not to take notice of it then,' the queen said. The princess's condition had often to be taken into consideration, and perhaps she was not unwilling that her superiority, in this respect, to her childless sister should be fully evident. She was then within a few weeks of her confinement, not a moment at which an affectionate and very dependent woman could be parted from her bosom friend.

This letter brought the situation to a climax. It was not to be expected in any circumstances that Anne would have submitted to a mandate which in reality would have taken from her all power to choose her own friends; and her affections were so firmly fixed upon her beloved companion that it is evident life without Sarah would have been a blank to her. She answered in a letter studiously compiled in defence both of herself and her retainer: 'I am satisfied that she cannot have been guilty of any fault to you, and it would be extremely to her advantage if I could here repeat every word that ever she said to me of you in her whole life,' says the princess; and she ends by entreating her

sister 'to recall her severe command,' and declaring that there is no misery that I 'cannot readily resolve to suffer rather than the thoughts of parting with her.' But things had gone too far to be stopped by any such appeal. The letter was answered by the Lord Chamberlain in person, with a message forbidding Lady Marlborough to continue at the Cockpit. This was arbitrary in the highest degree, for the house was Anne's private property, bought for and settled upon her by Charles II.; and it was unreasonable, for Whitehall was lying in ruins, and Queen Mary's sight at Kensington could not be offended by the spectacle of the couple who had so enraged her. The princess's spirit was roused. She wrote to her sister that she herself would be obliged to retire since such were the terms of her continuance, and sent immediately to the Duchess of Somerset to ask for a loan of Sion House. It is said that William so far interfered in this squabble, in which, indeed, he had been influential all along, as to ask the Duke to refuse this trifling favour. But of all English noble houses, the proud Somersets were the last to be dictated to. And Anne established herself triumphantly in her banishment on the banks of the Thames with her favourite at her side.

Her infant was born some time after, and the queen paid her an angry visit of ceremony upon that event, saying nothing to her but on the vexed subject. 'I have made the first step by coming to you,' Mary said, approaching the bedside where the poor princess lay sad and suffering, for the baby had died soon after its birth, 'and I now expect you should make the next

by removing my Lady Marlborough.' The princess, trembling, and 'as white as her sheets,' stammered forth her plaintive protest that this was the only thing in which she had ever disobeyed, and that it was unreasonable to ask it of her. Whereupon Mary without another word left the room and the house. This was the last time they ever met, unlikely as such a thing seemed. Anne made various overtures of reconciliation, but as unconditional obedience was promised in none, Mary resisted all and died at enmity with her sister. The only justification that can be offered for the queen's behaviour was that they had been long separated, and had little except the formal tie of relationship to bind them to each other. Anne had been but a child when Mary married and left England. They were both married and surrounded by other affections when they met again. They had so much resemblance of nature that each seems to have been capable but of one passion. It was Mary's good fortune to love her husband with all her heart, but to all appearance no one else. She had not a friend among all the ladies who had shared her life for years, neither intimate nor companion who could give her any solace when he was absent. Natural affection was not strong in their family; they had no mother, nor bond of common relationship except the father whom they both superseded. All this explains to a certain extent her coldness to Anne; and it is very likely that she thought she was doing the best thing possible for her sister in endeavouring to separate her from an evil influence, an inferior who was her mistress. But this does not excuse the petty and cruel

persecution to which Anne was henceforward exposed. Every honour that belonged to her rank was taken from her, from the sentry at her door to the text laid upon her cushion at church, which was one of the privileges of royalty. She was allowed no guard when she went into the country; the rural mayors were forbidden to make addresses to her, or pay the usual honours which mayors delight to pay. The great court ladies were given to understand that whoever visited her would not be received by the queen. A more irritating and miserable persecution could not be, nor one more lowering to the character of the chief actor in it.

Anne was but recovering from the illness which followed her confinement, and with which her sister's angry visit was supposed to have something to do, when another blow fell upon the band of friends. Marlborough was suddenly arrested and sent to the Tower. There was reason enough, perhaps, for his previous disgrace in the secret relations with St. Germains which he was known to have kept up, but it happened unfortunately for his enemies that the conspiracy for which he was now taken, along with many other personages of rank, was a fictitious one. 'A dreadful plot broke out which was said to have been hid somewhere, I don't know where, in a flowerpot,' Lady Marlborough says with not unnatural scorn. The plot was that which a certain Robert Young, one of the many false accusers, of the class which Dr. Titus Oates had originated, invented about this time, supporting it with forged letters. It was during William's absence on the Continent, when Mary was

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*From the picture by Sir Godfrey Kneller, in the National Portrait Gallery*

reigning alone in England, and at the moment when a great expedition was preparing in France and the air full of peril; and the queen's advisers were sufficiently alarmed to urge the arrest of all the great personages named. The moment, however, that the accused were confronted with their accuser, the folly and falsehood of the invented plot was discovered, and all the prisoners were liberated—except Marlborough, who was kept, with what it seems impossible to think of as anything but a petty spitefulness, in prison until the end of the term, when bail was accepted for him. Lady Marlborough left Sion and went to town to be near her husband, and during this separation a little correspondence sprang up between her and her royal patroness, which reveals Anne very clearly in her affectionate simplicity. It would appear that the arrest of Marlborough was attended by rumours of danger to Anne herself, of which she speaks in the first letter of the series. Lady Marlborough had no doubt hurried away on the first receipt of the news, and it is from her chamber that the princess sends these first words of consolation and encouragement:—

'I hear Lord Marlborough is sent to the Tower: and though I am certain that they have nothing against him, and expected by your letter it would be so, yet I was struck when I was told it: for methinks it is a dismal thing to have one's friends sent to that place. I have a thousand melancholy thoughts, and cannot help fearing they hinder you from coming to me: though how they could do that without making you a prisoner I cannot imagine. I am just told by pretty good hands that as soon as the wind turns westerly there will be a guard set upon the prince and me. If you hear

there is any such thing designed, and that 'tis easy to you, pray let me see you before the wind changes: for afterwards one does not know whether they will let one have opportunities of speaking to one another. But let them do what they please, nothing shall ever vex me so I can have the satisfaction of seeing dear Mrs. Freeman, and I swear I would live on bread and water between four walls with her without repining: for so long as you continue kind nothing can ever be a real mortification to your faithful Mrs. Morley, who wishes she may never enjoy a moment's happiness in this world or the next if she proves false to you.'

Whether the wind proving 'westerly' was a phrase understood between the correspondents, or if it had anything to do with the events of the impending battle upon which the fate of England was hanging, it is difficult to tell. If it was used in the latter sense the victorious battle of La Hogue, by which all recent discomfitures were redeemed, soon restored the government to calm, and a consciousness of triumph; and made conspiracy comparatively insignificant. Before this great deliverance was known Anne had written a submissive letter to her sister informing her that she had now recovered her strength 'well enough to go abroad,' and asking leave to pay her respects to the queen, to which Mary returned a stern answer, declaring that such civilities were unnecessary so long as her sister declined to do the thing required of her. Anne sent a copy of this letter to Lady Marlborough, announcing—as she was now 'at liberty to go where I please by the queen refusing to see me'—her intention to make an expedition to London and see her friend, who was then in such trouble as the princess herself

was very familiar with, the loss of an infant. 'I am sensibly touched with the misfortune that my dear Mrs. Freeman has had in losing her son, knowing very well what it is to lose a child,' the princess writes; 'but she knowing my heart so well, and how great a share I have in all her concerns, I will not say any more on this subject for fear of moving her passion too much.' Throughout this separation these little billets were continually coming and going; and I cannot do better than transcribe for the reader some of those innocent letters, so natural, and full of the writer's heart:—

'Though I have nothing to say to my dear Mrs. Freeman, I cannot help inquiring how she and her lord does. If it be not convenient to you to write when you receive this, either keep the bearer till it is, or let me have a word or two from you by the very next opportunity—when it is easy to you; for I would not be a constraint to you at any time, much less now, when you have so many things to do and think of. All I desire to hear from you at such a time is that you and yours are well; which, next to having my Lord Marlborough out of his enemies' power, is the best news that can come to her who to the last moment of her life will be dear Mrs. Freeman's.'

'I give dear Mrs. Freeman a thousand thanks for her kind letter which gives me an account of her concerns: and that is what I desire more to know than any other news. I shall reckon the days and hours, and think the time very long till the time is out for both your sake and my Lord Marlborough's, and that he may be at liberty and your mind at ease. . . . And dear Mrs. Freeman doesn't say when I can see you if I come to town, therefore I ask which day will be most convenient for you. . . . I confess I long to see you, but am not so unreasonable to desire that satisfaction till it is easy to you.

I wish with all my soul that you may not be a true prophetess, and that it may soon be in our power to enjoy one another's company more than it has been of late, which is all I want in this world.'

'I am sorry with all my heart dear Mrs. Freeman meets with so many delays; but it is a comfort they cannot keep Lord Marlborough in the Tower longer than the end of the term, and I hope when the Parliament sits care will be taken that people may not be clapt up for nothing, or else there will be no living in quiet for anybody but insolent Dutch and smiling mercenary Englishmen. Dear Mrs. Freeman, be assured your faithful Mrs. Morley can never change: and I hope you do not in the least doubt of her kindness, which if it be possible, increases every day, and that can never have an end but with her life. Mrs. Morley hopes her dear Mrs. Freeman will let her have the satisfaction of hearing from her again to-morrow.'

'Dear Mrs. Freeman may easily imagine I cannot have much to say since I saw her. However, I must write two words. For though I believe she does not doubt of my constancy, feeling how base and false all the world is, I am of that temper I think I can never say enough to assure you of it. Therefore, give me leave to assure you they can never change me. And there is no misery I cannot readily resolve to suffer rather than the thought of parting from you. And I do swear I would sooner be torn in pieces than alter this my resolution. My dear Mrs. Freeman, I long to hear from you.'

This pretty correspondence changed in tone a little, but only to grow more impassioned, when the princess had gone to Bath, and the friends were less near each other. Anne had been pursued by the royal displeasure in her invalid journey, and no less a person than Lord Nottingham, the Lord Chamberlain, had been employed

to warn the mayor that his civilities to the princess were ill-timed. Such a disclosure of the family quarrel evinced a determination and bitterness which perhaps frightened even Lady Marlborough, courageous as she was; or perhaps it was a still bolder stroke for sovereignty over the poor lady who had already suffered so much for her. But it is evident that she had offered her resignation, and indeed pressed it upon her adoring mistress, as there are many letters with the same burden as the following:—

'I really long to know how my dear Mrs. Freeman got home, and now I have this opportunity of writing she must give me leave to tell her, if she should ever be so cruel as to leave her faithful Mrs. Morley, she will rob her of all the joy and quiet of her life; for if that day should come, I could never enjoy a happy minute, and I swear to you I would shut myself up and never see a creature. You may easily see all this would have come upon me if you had not been. If you do but remember what the queen said to me the night before your lord was turned out of all; then she began to pick quarrels; and if they should take off twenty or thirty thousand pounds, have I not lived upon as little before! When I was first married we had but twenty (it is true, indeed, the king was so kind to pay my debts), and if it should come to that again, what retrenchment is there in my family I would not willingly make, and be glad of that pretence to do it. Never fancy, my dear Mrs. Freeman, if what you fear should happen, that you are the occasion: no, I am very well satisfied, and so is the prince too, it would have been so, however, for *Caliban* is capable of doing nothing but injustice: therefore rest satisfied you are no ways the cause, and let me beg once more for God's sake that you will never mention parting more, no, nor so much as think of it: and if you should ever leave me, be assured it would break your faithful Mrs. Morley's heart.'

A still stronger expression of the same sentiment, with a little gleam of some general principle of self-assertion and sense of injured dignity follows, after the princess had, as would seem, taken counsel with her George. That heavy prince was fully acquiescent at least, if nothing more, in his wife's devotion.

'In obedience to dear Mrs. Freeman I have told the prince all she desired me, and he is so far from being of another opinion, if there had been occasion he would have strengthened me in my resolutions, and we both beg you would never mention so cruel a thing again. Can you think either of us so wretched that for the sake of twenty thousand pounds, and to be tormented from morning to night with flattering knaves and fools, we should forsake those we have such obligations to, and that we are so certain we are the occasion of all their misfortunes? Besides, can you believe we will truckle to Caliban, who from the first moment of his coming has used us at that rate as we are sensible he has done, and that all the world can witness that will not let their interest weigh more with them than their reason? But suppose I did submit, and that the king could change his nature so much as to use me with humanity, how would all reasonable people despise me? How would that Dutch monster laugh at me, and please himself with having got the better! And, which is much more, how would my conscience reproach me for having sacrificed it, my honour, reputation, and all the substantial comforts of this life, for transitory interest, which even to those who make it their idol can never afford any real satisfaction, much less to a virtuous mind! No, my dear Mrs. Freeman, never believe that your faithful Mrs. Morley will ever submit. She can wait with patience for a sunshine day, and if she does not live to see it, yet she hopes England will flourish again. Once more give me leave to beg you would be so kind never to speak of parting more, for let what will happen, that is the only thing that can make me miserable.'

These are the letters which Lord Macaulay described as expressing 'the sentiments of a fury in the style of a fishwoman.' It was not indeed pretty to call great William Caliban, but Anne was fond of nicknames, and the king's personal appearance was not his strong point. To us these outbursts of indignation seem both natural and allowable. She had been subjected to an inveterate and petty persecution; her little magnanimities had been answered by exactions. We are all so ready to believe that whenever a woman is involved she must be the offender, that most readers will have set down the insults to which Anne was subject to the account of Mary —as indeed has been done in these pages. But it is curious to note that by Anne herself all the blame is thrown upon the harsh brother-in-law, the Dutch monster, the alien who had made so many strangers into English noblemen, and who identified Marlborough, among all the other courtiers who had been as little steadfast as he, as the object of a pertinacious persecution. The princess says nothing of her sister. It is Caliban who is capable of nothing but injustice. It is he who will laugh if he gets the better of her. Anne's style is perhaps not quite worthy of the Augustan age, but it is quite intelligible, and full of little individual tones which are more characteristic than the smoother graces. That she loved her friend with her whole heart, that she had a generous contempt for interested motives, and, humble as she was, a just sense of her own dignity, are all abundantly and very simply manifest in them. We think they will give to the impartial reader the impression of a natural and artless

character, with much generous feeling, and much tender affectionateness, tenacious of her rank and its observances, yet willing to throw all these trifles down at the feet of her friend. Poor young lady! when we recollect how constantly the princess's 'condition' had to be thought of—how her long patience and many pains ended constantly in the little waxen image of a dead baby and nothing more—who can wonder that the world seemed falling to pieces about her when she was threatened with the loss of the one strong sustaining prop upon which she had hung from her childhood, the friend who had helped her to all her first experiences in life, the companion who had amused so many weary days, and made the time pass as no one else could do?

All these miserable disputes, however, end in a moment, the interest fading out of them, when brought into the cold twilight of a death-chamber, where even kings and queens are constrained to see things at their true value. Of all the royal personages in the kingdom Mary's would have seemed to any outside spectator the soundest and safest life. William had never been healthy, and was consumed by the responsibilities and troubles into which he had plunged. Anne had those ever-succeeding maternities to keep her at a low level. But Mary was young, vigorous, and happy—happy at least in her devotion to her husband and his love for her. It was she, however, who, to the awe and consternation of the world, was stricken in her prime, in a few days' illness, in the midst of her greatness. Such a catastrophe no one could behold without the profoundest impulse of pity. Whatever she had done

a week ago, there she lay now, helpless, all her splendours gone from her, the promise of a long career ended, and her partner left heart-broken upon the solitary throne to which she alone had given him a right. The catastrophe of a death so sudden and unlooked for is tragic indeed, yet scarcely more so than the sight of so forlorn a man, a powerful king, yet heart-broken, without courage or strength for anything, the support of love withdrawn, and a surging waste of alien minds and doubtful counsellors round him. Anne on her part was deeply shocked and startled by this dreadful event. She sent anxious messages asking to be admitted to her sister's bedside, and when all was over, partly no doubt from policy, but we may be at least permitted to believe partly from good feeling, presented herself at Kensington Palace, to show at least that rancour was not in her heart. Unfortunately there was no reconciliation between the sisters, Mary being most likely too ill even to consider the prayer of Anne for a last meeting. But when the forlorn and solitary king was roused in his misery to receive his sister-in-law's visit, a sort of peace was patched up between them over that unthought-of grave. There was no longer any public quarrel or manifestation of animosity: and with this melancholy event the first half of Anne's history may be brought to an end.

# THE QUEEN AND THE DUCHESS

## II

A YEAR after the accession of William and Mary, and before any of the bitterness and conflicts above recorded had openly begun, the only child of Anne on whose life any hopes could be built was born. Her many babies had died at the birth, or immediately after, and their quick and constant succession, as has been said, was the distinguishing feature of her personal life. But after the Revolution, when everything was settling out of the confusion of the crisis, and when as yet no further troubles had disclosed the family rancours and disagreements, in the country air at Hampton Court where the new king and queen were living, a little prince was born. Though he was sickly at first like all the rest, he survived the dangers of infancy, and, called William after the king, and bearing from the first day of his life the title of Duke of Gloucester, was received joyfully by the nation at large and everybody concerned, as the authentic heir to the crown. This child kept a little hold, it would seem, on the affections of the childless Mary during the whole course of the quarrel with his mother, embittered as it was, and continued an object of interest and kindness to William as long as he

WILLIAM III

*From a picture by Sir Godfrey Kneller at Windsor Castle*

lived. The interposition of the quaint and precocious child with his big head, his primitive enlightenment as to what it was and was not prudent to say, his sparkle of childish ambition, and all his old-fashioned ways, makes a curious and welcome diversion in the troubled scene where nothing is happy, not even the little prince. He was the chief occupation of Anne's life when comparative peace followed the warlike interval, and a cold and proud civility replaced the active hostilities which for years had been raging between the court and the household of the princess. Anne has never got much credit for her forbearance and self-effacement at the critical moments of her career. But it is certain that she might have given William a great deal of trouble had she asserted her rights as Mary's successor, as she might also have done at the time of the first settlement. No doubt he would on both occasions have carried the day, and with this certainty the historians have been satisfied without considering that a woman, who was not of lofty character and who was a Stewart, must have found it doubly bitter to acknowledge herself the subject of a gloomy brother-in-law who slighted her, and who, her rasher partisans did not hesitate to say, ought to have been her subject so long as he remained in England after her sister's death. The absence of any attempt on her part to disturb or molest, nay her little advances, her letters of condolence on his bereavement, and of congratulation the first time that a victory gave the occasion, show no inconsiderable magnanimity on the part of the passive princess—all the more that she had not been in the

habit (as is usual among women) of putting the scorns she had suffered to another woman's account and holding Mary responsible, but had uniformly attributed to the 'Dutch monster,' the 'Caliban' of her correspondence, all the slights that were put upon her.

William did very little, however, to encourage any overture of friendship. He received her after his wife's death, and they are said by one of the attendants to have wept together when the unwieldy princess, then unable to walk, was carried in her chair into the very presence-chamber. But if a touch of nature drew them together at this moment, it did not last, and in the diminished ceremonial of the widower's court Anne had but scant respect and no welcome. But she made no further complaint, even did what she could to keep on terms of civility at least, and wrote him her little letters of politeness notwithstanding the disapproval of Lady Marlborough, who was of no such gentle temper, and the absence of all response from William. He, with all his foreign wars and home troubles, solitary, sad, and heart-broken, had little heart we may suppose for these little commonplace advances from a woman he had never been able to tolerate. But though Anne's relations with the king were thus but little modified, her position in respect to the courtiers who had abandoned her in her sister's lifetime was different indeed. Lady Marlborough describes this with her usual force:—

'And now it being quickly known that the quarrel was made up, nothing was to be seen but crowds of people of all sorts, flocking to Berkley House, to pay their respects to the prince

and princess: a sudden alteration which I remember occasioned the half-witted Lord Caernavon to say one night to the princess as he stood close by her in the circle, "I hope your highness will remember that I came to wait upon you when none of this company did," which caused a great deal of mirth.'

Meanwhile the little boy, the heir of England, interposes his quaint little figure with that touch of nature which always belongs to a child, in the midst of all the excitements and dulness—awaking a certain interest even in the sorrowful and bereaved life of William, and filling his mother's house with tender anxieties and pleasures. He was sickly and feeble from his childhood, but early learned the royal lesson of self-concealment, and was cuffed and hustled by the anxious cruelty of love into the use of his poor little legs years after his contemporaries had been in full enjoyment of their liberty. It is characteristic of the self-absorbed and belligerent chronicler of the princess's household, whose narrative of all the quarrels and struggles of the royal households is so vivid, that she has very little to say about either the living or dying of the only child who was of such importance both to her mistress and to the country. His little existence is pushed aside in Lady Marlborough's record, and but for a squabble over the appointment of the duke's 'family,' which she gives with great detail, we should scarcely know that Anne had tasted that happiness of maternity which is so largely weighted with pains and cares. But the story of little Gloucester's life as found in the more familiar record of his waiting-gentleman, Lewis Jenkins, is both

attractive and entertaining. The little fellow seems to have been full of lively spirit and observation, active and restless in spite of his feebleness, with a child's interest in everything about him, and a singular share of those faculties of precocious judgment and criticism, which are sometimes so remarkably developed in children. Some of the little stories which are told of him put these powers in a startling light. 'Who has taught you to say such words?' his mother asks him when the child has been betrayed into some innocent repetition of the oaths he had heard from his attendants. The boy pauses before he replies, 'If I say Dick Denny,' he whispers to a favourite lady-in-waiting, 'he will be sent downstairs. Mamma, I invented them myself,' he adds aloud. The little being hovering among worlds not realised, learning to play his little part, taking his cue from the countenances round him, forming his little policy in the twinkling of an eye, could not have had a better representative. His careless indifference to his chaplain's religious services, but happy learning of little prayers and verses with the old lady to whom he had taken a fancy, his weariness of lessons, yet eager interest in the diagrams that drop from Lewis Jenkins's pocket-book, and in all the bits of history he can induce his Welsh usher to tell him, awaken in us an amused yet pathetic interest. A troublesome, lovable, perverse, delightful child, not always easy to manage, constantly asking the most awkward questions, full of ambition and energy and spirit and foolishness, the dull princess's somewhat tedious life brightens into hope and sweetness so long as he is there.

In every respect it was the brightest moment of Anne's life. There was no longer any possibility of treating the next heir to the crown, the mother of the only prince in whom the imagination of England could take pleasure, with slighting or contumely. She was permitted to bear her share of the honours and comforts of English royalty. St. James's old red brick palace—then, to be sure, the height of the fashion—was given over to her, as became her position, and what was more wonderful, Windsor Castle, one of the noblest of royal dwellings, became the country house of Anne and her boy. King William preferred Hampton Court, with its Dutch gardens, in which he could imagine himself at home: the great feudal castle, lifting its towers from the gentle hill which has the value of a much greater eminence in the midst of the broad plain that sweeps forth in every direction round, was not apparently to his taste: and few prettier or more innocent scenes have been associated with its long history than those in which little Gloucester was the chief actor. He had a little regiment of boys of his own age, whom it was his delight to drill and lead through a hundred mock battles and rapid skirmishings—mischievous little urchins, who called themselves the Duke of Gloucester's men, and played their little pranks like their seniors, as favourites will. When he went to Windsor, four Eton boys were sent for to be his playmates, one of them being young Churchill, the son of Lady Marlborough. Of all places it was St. George's Hall which the little prince chose for the scene of his mimic battles, and there the little army stormed and besieged each other to their hearts' con-

tent. When his mother's marriage day was celebrated, he received his parents with salvos of his small artillery, and, stepping forth in his little birthday suit, paid them his 'compliment.' 'Papa, I wish you and mamma unity, peace, and concord, not for a time, but for ever,' said the serious little hero. One can fancy Anne smiling and triumphant in her joy of motherhood, with her beautiful chestnut curls and sweet complexion and placid roundness, leaning on good George's arm, her peaceful companion with whom she never had a quarrel, and admiring her son's infant wisdom. It was their happy time: no cares of state upon their heads, no quarrels on hand, and Sarah of Marlborough, let us hope, smiling too and at peace with everybody, her Eton boy taking part in the ceremonial. The little smoke and whiff of gunpowder, the little gunners at their tiny artillery, the great hall still slightly athrill with the mimic salute, adds something still to the boundless hopefulness of the scene: for why should not this little English William grow up as great a soldier and more fortunate than his grim godfather, and subdue France under the foot of England, and be conqueror of the world? All this was possible in these pleasant days.

On another occasion there was a great chapter of the Knights of the Garter, and installation of little Gloucester in knightly state as one of the order. The little figure, seven years old, seated under the noble canopy in St. George's beautiful chapel, gazing with blue eyes intent in all the gravity of a child upon the great English nobles in their stalls around him, himself invisible behind the desk, upon which his prayer-book

was opened out, makes another touching picture. King William himself had buckled the garter round the child's knee and hung the jewel about his neck —St. George slaying his dragon, that immemorial emblem of the victory over evil—and no doubt in the vague grandeur of childish anticipation the boy felt himself ready to emulate the career of his patron saint. He was a little patriot too, eager to lend the aid of his small squadron to his uncle when William went away to the wars, and bringing a smile even upon that worn and melancholy face as he manœuvred his little company, and showed how they would fight in Flanders when the moment came. When William was threatened with assassination, and the country woke up to feel that though she did not love him it would be much amiss to lose him, little Gloucester, at eight, was one of the most loyal of Englishmen. Taking counsel with his little regiment, he drew up a little memorial, written out no doubt by the best master of the pen among them, with much shedding of ink, if not of more precious fluid. 'We, your majesty's subjects, will stand by you while we have a drop of blood,' was the address to which the Duke of Gloucester's men set all their tiny fists. The little duke himself, not content with this, added to it another address of his own :—

'I, your Majesty's most faithful subject, had rather lose my life in your Majesty's cause than in any man's else; and I hope it will not be long ere you conquer France.

'GLOUCESTER.'

Heroic little prince! a Protestant William, yet a gay

and gentle Stewart, with this heart of enthusiasm and generous valour in him, what might he not have done had he ever lived to be king! These lost possibilities, which are so common in life, are almost the saddest things in it; and that must be a heart very strong in faith that is not struck dumb by the withdrawal from earth's extreme need of so much faculty that seemed wanted for her help and succour. It certainly awoke a smile, and might have drawn along with it an iron tear down William's cheek, to see this faithful little warrior ready to 'lose his life' in his defence. And the good pair behind him, George and Anne, who had evidently suffered no treacherous suggestion to get to the ear of their boy, no hint that William was an usurper, and that little Gloucester had more right than he to be uppermost, how radiant they stand in the light of their happiness and hope! The spectator is reluctant to turn the page and realise the gloom to come.

'When the Duke of Gloucester was arrived at an age to be put into men's hands,' William's relentings and change of mind were proved by the fact that Marlborough, who had been in disgrace all these years, and whom only the constant favour of Anne had kept out of entire obscurity, was recalled into the front of affairs in order to be made 'governor' of the young prince. He was at the same time restored to his place in the privy council and to his military appointments, and shortly afterwards received a still higher honour in being named one of the supreme council of nine who had charge of the kingdom as the king's deputies in his

absence. No distinct reason appears for this sudden and extraordinary change. Marlborough's long connection with the princess's family made him indeed peculiarly suitable to have the charge of her son; but William had not hitherto showed any desire to humour her likings, and this was not reason enough for all the other marks of favour bestowed upon Marlborough, which brought him back at once from private life and political disgrace to a position as high as any in the kingdom. Nor was William's temper of that generous kind which cannot do enough to make up for an estrangement. He acknowledged, however, Marlborough's qualifications in the most courtly manner. 'Teach him,' William said, 'to be like yourself, and he will not want accomplishments.' It is curious to find Lady Marlborough, to whom this reinstalment of her husband should, one would have thought, have been a great triumph, narrating so remarkable a change in the coolest manner, with an evident intention of turning the thoughts of her reader from Marlborough's recall to a little arbitrariness and caprice about the appointment of the secondary members of the household, by which she declares it was intended to humiliate and embarrass her mistress. Probably in her old age it had escaped from her memory that this was the new beginning of her husband's great career. But it was indeed so, and the commanding figure of the great general was brought back to the eyes of the world in a moment, by the charge thus conferred upon him. No doubt it was partially neutralised at the time by William's choice of Bishop Burnet as little Gloucester's

tutor. Burnet had been deep in William's counsels from the beginning; he had been Mary's confidant and friend. He was a good Scotchman and a bad Churchman, in evil odour with the ecclesiastical party to which the princess clung, and it was universally supposed that no appointment more disagreeable to her could have been made. But there is no appearance that she made any protest or showed any reluctance to accept him. Burnet himself did by no means relish the honour thus thrust upon him. He was almost disposed, he tells us, 'to retire from the court and town,' much as that would have cost him, rather than take upon him such a charge. But the pleasure of believing that 'the king would trust that care only to me,' and also some unexpected 'encouragement' received from the princess, decided him to make the experiment. William had satisfied him less of late years, and he was disappointed, Lord Dartmouth says, not to have got the see of Winchester, which he would have much preferred even to a royal tutorship. But no complaint or resistance seems to have come from Windsor, which was within his diocese, to simplify matters. The little pupil was about nine when he came into the bishop's hands.

'I had been trusted with his education now for two years, and he had made amazing progress. I had read over the Psalms, Proverbs, and Gospels with him, and had explained things that fell in my way very copiously; and was often surprised with the questions that he put to me, and the reflections that he made. He came to understand things relating to religion beyond imagination. I went through geography so often with him that he knew all the maps very particularly. I explained to him the forms of government in

every country, with the interests and trade of that country, and what was both bad and good in it: I acquainted him with all the great revolutions that had been in the world, and gave him a copious account of the Greek and Roman histories and of Plutarch's lives: the last thing I explained to him was the Gothic constitution and the beneficiary and feudal laws: I talked of these things at different times, even three hours a day: this was both easy and delighting to him. The king ordered five of his chief ministers to come once a quarter and examine the progress he made: they seemed amazed both at his knowledge and the good understanding that appeared in him; he had a wonderful memory and a very good judgment.'

Poor little Gloucester! the genial bishop, breaking down all this knowledge into pleasant talks, so that it should be both 'easy and delighting': and his lessons in fortification, which were more delightful still, and his own little private prince-like observations of men's faces and minds, were all to come to nought. On his tenth birthday, amid the feasting and joy, a sudden illness seized him—and a few days after the promising boy had ended his bright little career. As a matter of course blame was attached to the doctor who attended him, and who had bled him in the beginning of a fever, but this was almost universally the case in the then state of medical science. 'He was the only remaining child,' the bishop says, 'of seventeen that the princess had borne, some to the full time, and the rest before it. She attended on him during his sickness with great tenderness, but with a grave composure that amazed all who saw it: she bore his death with a resignation and piety that were indeed very singular.' It was small wonder indeed if Anne were altogether

crushed by such a calamity. It is said by some historians of the Jacobite party that her mind was overwhelmed with a sense of her guilt towards her own father, and sense of just judgment executed upon her in the loss of her child; and that she immediately wrote to her father, 'pouring out her whole heart in penitence,' and pledging herself to support the claims of her brother 'should she ever come to the throne.' This letter, however, has never been found, and does not seem to be vouched for by witnesses beyond suspicion. But for the fact that Anne was stricken to the dust no parent will need further evidence. Her good days and hopes were over: henceforward, when she wrote to her dearest friend in the old confidential strain it was 'your poor unfortunate Morley' that the bereaved mother signed herself. Nothing altered these sad adjectives. She was poor and unfortunate in her unutterable loss, and in her lonely soul, as much when she was queen as if she had been the humblest woman that ever lost an only child.

Marlborough was absent when his little pupil fell ill, but hurried back to Windsor in time to see him die. It was etiquette in those days that in case of a death the survivors should instantly leave the house in which it had taken place, solemnly leaving the dead in possession, to lie in state there, and receive the homage of curious or sad spectators. But Anne would not be persuaded to leave the place where her child was. Four or five days after, Marlborough and the suite who had no doubt built all their hopes of preferment upon the boy, carried him solemnly by torchlight through the summer

woods, through Windsor Park, and by the river, and under the trees of Richmond, to Westminster, a silent procession, passing slowly through the odorous August night. His little body lay in state in Westminster Hall, a noble chamber for such a little sleeper—for five days more: when it was laid with the kings in the great Abbey which holds all the greatest of England. A more heartrending episode is not in history—so many hopes went to the grave with him, so many more arose and came to life again when his little life was over. At St. Germains it is said there was joy, for the most dangerous rival of the so-called Prince of Wales was now taken out of that luckless adventurer's way.

William did not take any notice of the announcement of the death for a long time, which embarrassed the ambassador at Paris greatly on the subject of mourning, and has given occasion for much denunciation of his hardness and heartlessness. When he answered at last, however, and this was not till more than two months after, in a letter to Marlborough, it was with much subdued feeling: 'I do not think it necessary to employ many words,' he writes, 'in expressing my surprise and grief at the death of the Duke of Gloucester. It is so great a loss to me as well as to all England that it pierces my heart with affliction.' William was ill, harassed, immersed in business, and his temper was morose and uncertain. It seems impossible that the loss of a child who had shown so touching an allegiance to himself should not have moved him; but perhaps there was in him too a touch of satisfaction that the rival pair, who had been thorns in his flesh since

ever he came to England, were not to have the satisfaction of carrying on the royal line. At St. Germains this satisfaction was more marked still, and it was supposed that the most dangerous obstacle in the way of the young James Stewart was removed by the death of his sister's heir. We know now how futile that hope was, but at the time this was not so clear: and the anxiety of the English Parliament to get a formal abjuration of the so-called Prince of Wales, shows that the feeling had much foundation.

This, and the new and exciting combination of European affairs, produced by what is called the Spanish Succession, occupied all minds during the two years that remained of William's suffering life. It was a moment of great excitement and uncertainty—Louis XIV., in whose hands, as seemed likely, a sort of universal power must fall if his grandson were permitted to succeed to the throne of Spain, had just vowed at the deathbed of James his determination to support the claims of his son, and on James's death, had proclaimed the boy King of England. Thus England had every reason of personal irritation and even alarm for joining in the alliance against the threatening supremacy of France, whose power, had she been allowed to place one of her princes peaceably on the Spanish throne, to which the rich Netherlands still belonged, would have been unprecedented in Europe. It was on the eve of this great struggle that William died. With a determination equal to that with which he had made head against failing fortune on many a battlefield, he fought for the life which at such a crisis was doubly important to the country of his

birth and of his crown, and to the cause of the Protestant religion throughout Europe. There is something pathetic in the struggle, in the statements of his case under one name or another, as a private individual, that there might be no doubt as to the frankness of the opinion, which he caused to be made among the great physicians of Europe. His life in itself could not have been a very happy or desirable one. He had no longer his popular and beloved Mary to leave behind him in England as his representative when he set out for the wars; and there were few in England whom he trusted fully, or who trusted him. To die at the beginning of a great European struggle, leaving the dull people whom he disliked to take his place in England, and the soldier whom he had crushed and subdued, and sternly held in the shade as long as he was able, to assume his baton, and win the victories it had never been William's fortune to gain, must have been bitter indeed. It would appear even that he had entertained some ideas of disturbing the natural order of events that this might be prevented, and that it had been suggested to the Electress Sophia, after poor little Gloucester's death, that her family should be nominated as his immediate successors, to the exclusion of Anne —a proposal which the prudent Electress evaded with great skill and ingenuity by representing that the Prince of Wales, who must surely have learned, he and his counsellors, wisdom from the failure of his father, was the natural heir, and would no doubt do well enough on a trial. Bishop Burnet denies that such a design was ever entertained, but Lord Dartmouth in his

note upon Burnet, gives the following very distinct evidence on the subject:—

'I do not know how far the Whig party would trust a secret of that consequence to such a blab as the bishop was known to be, but the dukes of Bolton and Newcastle both proposed it to me, and used the strongest argument to induce me to come into it; which was that it would be making Lord Marlborough king at least for her time if the princess succeeded: and that I had reason to expect nothing but ill-usage during such a reign. Lord Marlborough asked me afterwards in the House of Lords if I had ever heard of such a design: I told him yes, but did not think it very likely. He said it was very true: but by God, if ever they attempted it, we would walk over their bellies.'

Thus until the last moment Anne's position would seem to have been insecure; but a more impossible scheme was never suggested, for even the idea of Marlborough's triumph was unable to raise the smallest party against the princess, and to the country in general she was the object of a kind of enthusiasm. They loved everything in her, even the fact that she was not clever, which of itself is often highly ingratiating with the masses. William, it is said, with a magnanimity which was infinitely to his credit, named Marlborough as his most fit successor in the command of the allied armies before he died. The formal abjuration of the Prince of Wales was made by Parliament only just in time to have his assent, and thus all obstacles were removed out of the princess's way. It was thought by the populace that everything brightened for the new reign. There had been an unexampled continuance of gloomy weather, bad harvests, clouds, and storms. But

to greet Queen Anne the sun burst forth, the gloom dispelled, the country broke out into gaiety and rejoicing. A new reign full of new possibilities has always something exhilarating in it, and William's greatness was marred by many circumstances, and never heartily acknowledged by the mass of the people. But Anne had every claim upon the popular favour. She was a woman, and a kind and simple one. That desertion of her father, which prejudiced writers have condemned so bitterly, had no great effect upon the contemporary imagination, nor, so far as can be judged, upon her own; and it was the only offence which could be alleged against her. She had been unkindly treated and threatened with wrong, which naturally made the multitude strenuous in her cause—and everything conspired to make her accession happy. She was thirty-seven, and though somewhat unwieldy in person, still preserved her English comeliness, her abundant, beautiful hair, and above all, the beautiful voice of which even statesmen and politicians speak. 'She pronounced this,' says Bishop Burnet, describing her address to the Privy Council when they first presented themselves before her, 'as she did all her other speeches, with great weight and authority, and with a softness of voice and sweetness in the pronunciation that added much life to all she spoke.' The commentators who criticise so severely the bishop's chronicles, are in entire agreement with him on this subject. 'It is a real pleasure to hear her,' says Lord Dartmouth, 'though she had a bashfulness that made it very uneasy to herself to say much in public.' Speaker Onslow unites in the same testimony:

'I have heard the Queen speak from the throne, and she had all the author says here. I never saw an audience more affected: it was a sort of charm.'—'She received all that came to her in so gracious a manner that they went from her highly satisfied with her goodness and her obliging deportment; for she hearkened with attention to everything that was said to her.'—Thus everything smiled upon Anne in the morning of her reign. Her coronation was marked with unusual splendour and enthusiasm; and though the queen herself had to be carried in a chair to the Abbey, her state of health being such that she could not walk, this did not affect the splendid ceremonial in which, even to the Jacobites themselves, there was but little to complain of, since their hopes that Anne's influence might advance her father's young son to the succession after her were still high, notwithstanding that the settlement of the crown upon Sophia of Brunswick and her heirs had already been made.

It is needless for us to attempt a history of the great war which was one of the most important features in Anne's reign. No student of history can be ignorant of its general course, nor of the completeness with which Marlborough's victories crushed the exorbitant power of France, and raised the *prestige* of England. There are no lack of histories of the great general and his career of victory—how he out-fought, out-marched, out-generalled all his rivals, and scarcely in the ten years of active warfare encountered one check; how, though he did not accomplish the direct object for which all this bloodshed and toil was undertaken, and, indeed, had his

efforts balked at the end by a disgraceful treaty and hurried peace-making, he yet secured such respect for the English name and valour as renewed our old reputation, and made all interference with our national settlement or intrusion into our private economy impossible. 'What good came of it at last?' says the poet, with more reason than usual. But the inquiry, though so plausible, affecting at once humanity and common-sense, is not perhaps so hard to answer as it seems. Even up to this time it has been impossible to procure, in the intercourse of nations, any other effectual arbiter than the sword, a terrible one indeed, but apparently as yet the only means of keeping a check upon the rapacity of some, and protecting the weakness of others. At all events, whatever individual opinion may be on the point now, there was an unanimous conviction then, and no one doubted at the opening of the war that it was most necessary and just. And of its conduct there has never been but one opinion. Contemporaries accused Marlborough of every conceivable wickedness—of peculation, treachery, even personal cowardice; but no one ventured to say that he was not a great general; and as we have got further and further from the infuriated politics of his time, his gifts and graces, his wisdom and moderation, as well as his wonderful military genius, have been done more and more justice to.[1] His great fault was very patent and apparent. He was never sure which side he was on in one matter, and that the great one of the royal

[1] These pages were written before the appearance of Lord Wolseley's work: which, however, is only a proof the more of what is above said.

succession. He was not true, either to William or James, but would fain have held both in hand. Nor was he true to the Stewarts or the Brunswick party in later days. This is the great indictment which history makes against him: but at least the greater part of his contemporaries shared his guilt. To Anne herself, his patroness and upholder so long, but the cause of his final disgrace and fall, he never was untrue.

It is, however, with Marlborough's wife, and not with himself, that we are chiefly concerned, and with the change which took place in Anne's mind, and her many conflicts with her friend and fate, rather than the battles that were fought in her name. It is said that by the time she came to the throne, her faithful affection to her lifelong companion had begun to be impaired, but the date of the first beginning of their severance will probably never be determined, nor its immediate cause. Miss Strickland professes to have ascertained that certain impatient words used by Sarah of Marlborough, which were overheard by the queen, were the occasion of the breach; but as there is no very satisfactory foundation for the story, and it is added that Anne kept her feelings undisclosed for long after, we may dismiss the legend as possible enough, but no more. Other means of disunion were in existence, more dignified at least, and it is evident that whatever subjects of personal offence there might be between them, there was one difference of opinion in public matters which was very likely to undermine affection, and open the way for those private frets and scorns which aggravate every dispute—since when people are vexed with each other

at the discovery that they do not think alike, it is very natural that they should give more importance to the little carelessnesses of talk and criticism which, when such a separating process has commenced, come in so invariably, with an appearance of proving that the affection has never been genuine at all. It had been the universal impression that the reign of Anne would mean the reign of the Marlboroughs, and this, as has been shown, was the argument used to detach from her the envious generally, and especially those to whom Marlborough's advancement meant failure or peril of their own pretensions. Lady Marlborough herself states very clearly this general belief, and the speedy doubt thrown upon it.

'The elevation of my mistress to the throne brought me into a new scene of life, and into a new sort of consideration with all those, whose attention either by curiosity or ambition was turned to *politicks* and the court. Hitherto my favour with her Royal Highness, though it had sometimes furnished matter of conversation to the publick, had been of no moment to the affairs of the nation, she herself having no share in the counsels by which they were managed. But from that time I began to be looked upon as a person of consequence, without whose approbation, at least, neither places nor pensions nor honours were bestowed by the crown. The intimate friendship with which the Queen was known to honour me, afforded a plausible foundation for this opinion. And I believe therefore it will be a surprise to many to be told that the first important step which her Majesty took after her accession to the government was against my wishes and inclinations; I mean her throwing herself and her affairs almost entirely into the hands of the tories.'

We need not specify here the difference between the

terms Tory and Whig now and in Queen Anne's time: Lord Stanhope and Lord Macaulay have both stated them to mean very much the reverse of what they mean now, though we think this is scarcely a correct statement. The Tories, then as now, were emphatically the Church party, which was to Anne the only party in which safety could be found. The new queen had little understanding of history or politics in the wider sense of the words, but she was an excellent Churchwoman, and in this sphere of faith her conviction was absolute. It had been believed, and no doubt by no one more than Lady Marlborough herself, that the new reign would produce an immediate change in the State machinery, and that the Tory ministry left in possession by William would soon be changed for another holding the principles which were dear to herself, and supporting her lord through thick and thin. But Anne, like so many heirs before her, on their accession, with that timidity which an unaccustomed responsibility so often brings with it, made no change, and soon found in the sentiments of the Tory leaders something more in accord with her own than the bolder spirit of Lady Marlborough had ever manifested. 'These were men who had all a wonderful zeal for the Church, a sort of public merit that eclipsed all other in the eyes of the Queen. . . . For my own part,' Lady Marlborough adds, 'I had not the same prepossessions. The word *Church* had never any charm for me in the mouths of those who made the most noise with it; for I could not perceive that they gave any other distinguishing proof of their regard for the thing, than a frequent use of the word

like a spell to enchant weak minds, and a persecuting zeal against dissenters, and against those real friends of the Church who would not admit that persecution was agreeable to its doctrine.'

This difference had not told for very much so long as neither the princess nor her friend had any share in public affairs, but it became strongly operative as soon as the business of the nation came into their hands. How much the queen had actually to do with that business, and how entirely it depended upon the influence brought to bear upon her limited mind, who should be the guiders of England at this critical moment, is abundantly evident from every detail of the history. Queen Victoria, great as her experience is, and notwithstanding the respectful attention which all classes of politicians would naturally give to her opinion, changes her ministers only when that majority in Parliament which is now accepted as the symbol of the vpiçe of the people requires it, and has only the very limited choice which the known and acknowledged heads of the parties permit when she transfers office and power from one side to the other. But Queen Anne had no compact body of statesmen—one replacing the other as occasion served—to deal with, but put in here one high official and there another with the most extraordinary and arbitrary individualism, which we can only now look at with amazement—replacing a Tory with a Whig when she could be persuaded to do so. In the ministry which she found on her accession Marlborough and Godolphin, who were more Whig than Tory, occupied a sort of isolated position, both of them holding their ground from King

William's appointment, and from the fact that there was nobody fit to replace them, rather than from any confidence of their colleagues or accord with the other members of the Government. No doubt the general impression was that this state of affairs would cease as soon as Anne had the power to change it; but it was not so, and the curious struggle carried on between the queen and her mistress of the robes on this question, the dogged yet passive resistance of the weaker woman, and the rising anger, wonder, and fiery indignation of the other afford a strange spectacle to the historical observer. The vulgar side of the matter, the imperious termagant's struggle for power and gain, the rise of the slipshod, stealthy waiting-woman into the post of favourite, the weak and foolish queen, delivered over to the domination of one or the other—is well known to most readers. There is something about a quarrel of women which always excites the bitterest scorn of every chronicler—an insidious contempt, which probably no one would own to, for the weaker half of the creation, lying dormant in the mind of the race generally, even of women themselves. Had Anne been a king of moderate abilities, and Marlborough the friend and guide to whom he owed his prosperity and fame, the relationship would have been noble and honourable to both; and, when the struggle began, the strenuous efforts of the great general to secure the co-operation of ministers with whom he could work, and whose support would have helped towards the carrying out of his great plans for the glory of his country and the destruction of her enemies, would, whether the historical

critic had approved of them or not, have at least secured his respect, and a dignified treatment. But when it is Sarah of Marlborough, with all the defects of temper that we know in her, who, while her lord fights abroad, has to fight for him at home, to scheme his enemies out of, and his friends into, power, to keep her hold upon her mistress by every means that her imagination could devise—the idea that some nobler motive than mere aggrandisement may be in the effort occurs to no one, and the hatred of political enmity is mingled with all the ridicule that spiteful wit can discharge upon a feminine squabble.

Lady Marlborough was far from being a perfect woman. She had a fiery temper and a stinging tongue. When she was thwarted on every side, and found herself impotent where she had been all-powerful, her fury was like a torrent against which there was no standing. But, with these patent defects, it ought to be allowed her, that the object for which she struggled was, after all, not only a perfectly legitimate, but a noble one. What the great William had spent his life in innumerable campaigns in endeavouring to do, against all the discouragements of frequent failure, Marlborough was doing, with a matchless and almost unbroken success. It was no shame to either the general or the general's wife to believe, as William did, that this was the greatest work of the time, and could alone secure the safety of England as well as of her allies: and the gallant stand of Lady Marlborough for the party and the statesmen who were likely to carry this object out, should gain her at least some credit as an

offset to the humiliating displays of temper which, no doubt, she was betrayed into when she found her influence beginning to fail.

The beginning of Queen Anne's reign showed no ignoble influence at work. One of the first things the queen did was to abolish the old and obstinate practice of selling places. At the time of Marlborough's disgrace under King William he had been bidden to 'sell or dispose of' the places he held—and it was the understood and invariable process, there being not even sufficient conscience of the evil to prompt concealment. Thus Lady Marlborough quotes a letter to her from Anne while still princess: 'Her highness wrote to me that she intended to take two new pages of the backstairs, but that she would not do it till my Lady Clarendon was gone, that I might have the advantage of putting them in, meaning that I might have the advantage of selling the places. For it must be recounted that at that time no person who was in any office at court, with places at his disposal, made any more scruple of selling them than of receiving his settled salary or the rents of his estates. It is no great wonder, therefore,' adds Lady Marlborough 'that being a young courtier, and not very rich, and having such an express direction from my mistress, I followed the prevailing custom and sold those two places. Yet it was not long before I began to condemn in my own mind this practice.' Whether it was in reality Lady Marlborough who took the initiative or not in this measure we cannot pronounce with certainty, as we have only her own word for it. But it certainly was

one of the first acts of the queen, and the credit of such a departure from the use and wont of courts, should at least be allowed to the new reign. Anne did various other things for which there was no precedent. When her civil list was granted to her she gave up at once £100,000 a year from it to aid the public expenses, then greatly increased by the war; and, shortly after, sacrificed the ecclesiastical tribute of first-fruits and tithes, namely, the first year's stipend of each cure to which a new incumbent was appointed, and the tenth of all livings to which the Crown, as succeeding the Pope in the headship of the Church, had become entitled. Anne resigned this for the augmentation of small livings, and there can be little doubt that this act, at least, was her own. The fund thus formed continues to this day under the name of Queen Anne's Bounty, and is still supposed to give grants to the poorer livings. It remained quite inefficacious during Anne's reign, in consequence of various difficulties in getting the scheme under weigh, and has not been since by any means the important agency she intended it to be. But the intention was munificent and the desire sincere. Throughout her life the Church was the power which had most influence over Anne. She was willing to do anything to strengthen it, and to sacrifice any one, even her dear friend, in its cause.

During the first part of her reign, however, there was no appearance of any intention to sacrifice that dear friend. A very short time after her accession, Marlborough, who had at once entered upon the conduct of foreign affairs and the preparations for the war, as

William had arranged, received the Garter which Anne and her husband had vainly asked for him in the previous reign: and when he returned from his first campaign, as was the usage in these times, when the armies had got into winter quarters, and made themselves comfortable for the severe season, a dukedom was bestowed upon him, with many pretty expressions on Anne's part and the little pleasant mystery on all sides of friends preparing a gratification which was also intended to be a surprise. 'I am apt to think Mrs. Morley may say something to you on this subject which perhaps you may not like,' says Lord Godolphin, for her confidants were aware that Lady Marlborough had no desire at that moment for promotion in rank. The queen's letter is pretty and tender, as usual:—

'I have had this evening the satisfaction of my dear Mrs. Freeman's of yesterday, for which I give you many thanks; and though I think it a long time since I saw you, I do not desire you to come one minute sooner to town than it is easy to you, but will wait with patience for the happy hour. . . . Lord treasurer intends to send you a copy of the address from the house of Lords, which is to be given me to-morrow, and that gives me an opportunity of mentioning a thing to you that I did not intend to do yet. It is very uneasy to your poor unfortunate faithful Morley to think that she has so little in her power to show how truly sensible I am of all my Lord Marlborough's kindness, especially at the time when he deserves all that a rich crown could give. But since there is nothing else at this time, I hope you will give me leave as soon as he comes to make him a duke. I know my dear Mrs. Freeman does not care for anything of that kind, nor I am not satisfied with it, because it does not enough express the value I have for Mr. Freeman, nor nothing ever can how passionately I am yours, my dear Mrs. Freeman.'

This is another proof of the queen's gift of 'writing pretty affectionate letters,' the only thing, according to the duchess's opinion of her, expressed in later days, that she could do well. A great number of these letters followed her accession. She was as anxious as ever to serve and please her friend and favourite. She prays God, in her little note of congratulation after the siege of Bonn in 1703, to send the great general 'safe home to his and my dear adored Mrs. Freeman,' with all the grace of perfect sympathy: for the great duke was as abject in his adoration of that imperious, bewitching, and triumphant Sarah as the queen herself. With the tenderest recollection of her friend's whims, the queen gave her the rangership of Windsor Park,[1] in which was included 'a lodge in the great park,' which the duchess describes as 'a very agreeable place to live in,' 'remembering that when we used in former days to ride by it I had often wished for such a place'—although it was necessary to turn out Portland, King William's friend and favourite, in order to leave the dwelling free. No doubt, however, this summary displacement of the Dutchman added to the pleasure both of giving and receiving. Lady Marlborough had a multiplicity of other offices in addition to this, such as those of Mistress of the Robes, Groom of the Stole, and Keeper of the Privy Purse, offices, however, which she had virtually held for years in the household of the princess, and from which she could scarcely have been excluded. All this brought her in a great deal of money, a matter to which she was never indifferent. Along with the dukedom,

[1] She made an excellent and careful Ranger, paying great attention to her duties, as some of her unpublished letters prove.

the queen also gave Marlborough a pension of £5000 a year, which some authorities say was not allowed until the next Parliament, but which finally became a part of the overflowing revenues of the new ducal house. They would seem by these posts and perquisites alone to have had an income between them not far short of £60,000 a year, an enormous income for those times. The queen also gave a little fortune to each of their daughters as they married—£5000 a piece, and offered a pension of £2000 a year to the duchess from the privy purse—a bounty which she declined, but which afterwards, in the fiery passion that possessed her at the final breaking up of their relations, she claimed the arrears of, amounting to £18,000, a proceeding which sadly detracts from her dignity. All these gifts and favours were poured upon her in the early days of Anne's reign. Before this the means of the pair had been but small. Marlborough had only very recently been restored to place at all, and the duchess informs us that all the offices for which afterwards she was so highly paid she had discharged in the princess's household on an allowance of £400 a year. For this reason the dukedom was unwelcome to her. 'I do agree with you,' her husband writes, 'that we ought not to wish for a greater title till we have a better estate,' and he assures her that 'I shall have a mind to nothing but as it may be easy to you.' Never was a woman more flattered, praised, and worshipped by all who were nearest to her: her queen and her duke vie with each other in tenderness: that her head should have been turned by it all was the most natural thing in the world, and that she should have thought

it impossible that love and service could ever fail her. When Marlborough sets out on his first campaign in this war, which was to cover him with glory, and in which for the first time he was to have full scope for his talents, this is how he writes to the companion of his life (she had gone with him to Margate to see him embark)—

'It is impossible to express with what a heavy heart I parted with you at the water's side. I could have given my life to have come back, though I know my own weakness so much that I durst not, for I know I should have exposed myself to the company. I did for a great while with a perspective glass look out upon the cliffs, in hopes I might have had one sight of you. We are now out of sight of Margate, and I have neither soul or spirits, but I do at this time suffer so much that nothing but being with you can recompense it.'

These lover-like words were written by a man of fifty-two to his wife of forty-two, to whom he had been married for nearly a quarter of a century. Through all the roaring of the guns, amid the plans and combinations of armies, and all the hard thinking and hard fighting, the perpetual activity and movement of his life for the next ten years, the same voice of passionate attachment, love and longing, penetrates for us the tumults of the time. On the plains of Flanders, in the blazing heat, he is glad to think that the sun which scorches him will be ripening the fruit at St. Albans, and bids her think how happy he would be to be walking there with her, for 'no ambition can make me amends for being from you.' When she is ill, he tells her that 'you shall quickly see you are much dearer to me than fame or whatever the world can say,' and is ready to leave everything in order to be with her

'All my happiness centres in living quietly with you,' he cries. 'I love you above my life: my greatest pleasure is writing to you or hearing from you.' When her 'dear letters' are kind (which it would appear they were not always) his joy knows no bounds. 'I am so entirely yours that if I might have all the world given me I could not be happy but in your love.' If there is a tone of anxiety in many of these epistles lest the great writer should have been in any way so unfortunate as to displease his dearest soul, the impression given of absolute devotion to her is only the more enhanced. If he has to allow to Lord Dartmouth that 'a man must bear a good deal to be quiet at home,' he never takes any such tone to himself. Thus she was flattered to the top of her bent, both by husband and mistress; and if she came to think herself indispensable, it is not much to be wondered at.

In the midst of all this prosperity, and the great hopes which the queen's favour, and the great opportunity which at last, after long waiting, had come to Marlborough, awakened, the same crushing calamity which had previously fallen upon Anne, overwhelmed her friends. Their only son, a promising boy of seventeen, died at Cambridge, and both father and mother were bowed to the dust. The queen's letter on this occasion expresses her sense of yet another melancholy bond between them. It is evident that she had offered to go to her friend in her affliction. 'It would have been a great satisfaction to your poor unfortunate faithful Morley if you would have given me leave to come to St. Albans,' she writes, 'for the unfortunate

ought to come to the unfortunate.' That such a blow should have come upon them at the moment of their opening fortune, when there was scarcely any limit to the hopes they might have formed for the future, is but another of those abounding examples of human vicissitude which are the commonplaces of life. With a heavy heart Marlborough changed his will, leaving the succession of the titles and honours so suddenly deprived of their pleasure to the family of his eldest daughter, and betook himself sadly to his fighting, deriving a gleam of satisfaction from the thought that other children might yet be granted to him, yet adjuring his wife to bear their joint calamity with patience, whatever might befall. She herself says nothing on this melancholy subject. Perhaps in her old age, as she sat surveying her life, that great but innocent sorrow may no longer have seemed to her of the first importance in a record crossed by so many tempests; perhaps it was of so much, that she does not trust herself to speak of it. Partisans were eager to point out how both she and her mistress had suffered the penalty of their sin against King James and his son, by being thus deprived of their respective heirs. It was 'a judgment,' a thing dear to the popular imagination, and most easily concluded upon at all times.

It would not seem, however, that this natural drawing of 'the unfortunate to the unfortunate' had the effect it might have had in further cementing the union of the queen and the duchess. The

> 'Little rift within the lute
> That by-and-by will make the music mute,'

begins to be apparent almost immediately after Anne's accession—not in lessening the warmth or tenderness of her letters, but by betraying a division of opinion of which we had not heard before. 'I cannot help being extremely concerned you are so partial to the Whigs, because I could not have you and your poor unfortunate faithful Morley differ in the least thing. And, upon my word, my dear Mrs. Freeman,' adds Queen Anne, 'you are mightily mistaken in your notion of a true Whig. For the character you give of them does not in the least belong to them, but to the Church,'—which was no doubt a character of ideal excellence set forth by both as belonging to her favourites. Soon, however, the queen cannot avoid seeing that her dear Mrs. Freeman does differ with her. On the subject of the Bill of Occasional Conformity—a bill which was aimed at the Dissenters, disallowing the expedient formerly admitted for the use of Nonconformists, of periodical compliance with the ceremonies of the Church, and with penal enactments against those who, holding any office under Government, should be present at any conventicle, or assembly for worship in any form but that of the Church of England—the queen writes as follows:—

'I must own to you that I never care to mention anything on this subject to you, because I know you would not be of my mind; but since you have given me this occasion, I can't forbear saying that I see nothing like persecution in this bill. You may think it is a notion Lord Nottingham has put into my head, but, upon my word, it is my own thought. . . . . I promise my dear Mrs. Freeman faithfully I will read the book she sent me, and beg she would never let difference of opinion hinder us from living together as we used to do. Nothing

shall ever alter your poor unfortunate faithful Morley, who will live and die, with all truth and tenderness, yours.'

As the differences went on increasing, however, Queen Anne gradually changed her ground. She 'hopes her not agreeing with anything you say will not be imputed to want of value, esteem, or tender kindness for my dear, dear Mrs. Freeman.' She is grieved that her friend should refrain from writing with the idea that her letters are troublesome, 'since you know very well they are not, nor ever can be so': but at the same time Anne finds courage enough to declare roundly that whenever public affairs are in the hands of the Whigs, 'I shall think the Church beginning to be in danger.'

Thus the political situation became more and more difficult. The Tories opposed and thwarted Marlborough's plans, and did what they could to throw discredit on them, though he belonged to their party; and made such a systematic assault upon Godolphin, that it was with difficulty that able minister could hold head against them. But Marlborough, at least, had no desire to throw himself into the arms of the Whigs, whither his wife would so fain have led him. He was almost as little encouraging to her political partialities as the queen was. 'I know,' he says, 'they would be as unreasonable as the other in their expectations if I should seek their friendship: for all parties are alike.' It was thus a hard part the duchess had to play, between the queen's determination that the Whigs were the enemies of the Church, and her husband's conviction that all parties were alike. He, perhaps, was the more hard to manage of the two. He voted for the

Occasional Conformity Bill against which she was so hot, and trusted in Harley, who indeed owed his first beginnings to Marlborough's favour, but whom the duchess saw through. In young St. John, too, the great general had perfect faith. 'I am very confident he will never deceive you,' he wrote to Godolphin. Thus the husband warmed in his bosom the vipers which were to sting him and bring a hasty end to his career, while his wife, more clear-sighted, and more high-tempered, always on the spot, and jealously watchful of everything that passed, stormed and entreated, and wrote a hundred letters, and used every art, both of war and peace, in vain.

It is easy to see how the duchess's continued letter-writing, her argumentative anxiety to prove that her correspondent was in error and she right, and her iteration of the same charges and reproaches, must have exasperated the queen, and troubled Marlborough in the midst of the practical difficulties of his career; but yet her position, too, is such as to call for sympathy. For she foresaw what actually did happen, and perceived whither the current was tending, but was refused any credit for her prognostications or help in subduing the dangerous forces she dreaded. How irritating this position must have been to a fiery temper it is needless to point out, and the duchess would not permit herself to be silenced by either husband or queen. Lord Macauley's description of the astonishing state of affairs, by which two of the ablest statesmen in Europe were obliged to have recourse for the conduct of the imperial business to the influence of one woman over another,

was thus far less true even than it seems on the surface. For Sarah of Marlborough suspected trouble when no one else did, fought violently against her husband's enemies before they had disclosed themselves, and dragged into office the men who could help him, by a pertinacious and unending struggle, moved by her own intuitions alone. Sometimes she frightened the queen by threats of resignation, until Anne abandoned all her new-born independence in terror at the suggestion; and anon, out of that ever-varying, all-energetic, capricious, imperious personality of hers, which kept everybody in movement, would send to her general, in the midst of his army, such a letter as almost made him weep for joy. 'I would not for anything in my power it had been lost,' he cries, 'for it is so very kind, that I would in return lose a thousand lives, if I had them, to make you happy. Before I sat down to write this letter I took yours that you wrote at Harwich (evidently by no means so sweet) out of my strong-box, and have burnt it: and if you will give me leave, it will be a great pleasure to me to have it in my power to read this dear, dear letter often, and that it may be found in my strong-box when I am dead.' It is touching to read such words from such a man, and it is touching, too, in its way, to hear Anne protesting on the other side, when she is threatened with the loss of both husband and wife. 'As for your poor unfortunate Morley, she could not bear it: for if ever you should forsake me I would have nothing more to do with the world, but make another abdication: for what is a crown when the support of it is gone?' A woman who calls forth such a

warmth of feeling cannot be summarily dismissed as a compound of vulgar rage, spite, and scheming. There must have been something more in her.

Meanwhile Marlborough was going on in his career of victory. It was a very costly luxury, but the pride of England had never been so fed with triumphs. Queen Anne was in her closet one day at Windsor, a little turret chamber, with windows on every side, looking over the green and fertile valley of the Thames, with all the trees in full summer foliage, and the harvest gathering in from the fields, when there was brought to her a scrap of crumpled paper bearing upon it the few hurried lines addressed to the duchess, which told of the 'glorious victory' of the battle of Blenheim. It had been torn off in haste from a memorandum-book on the field, and was scribbled over with an inn reckoning on the other side. The commotion it caused was not one of unmixed joy: for though the queen wrote her thanks and congratulations, and there was a great thanksgiving service at St. Paul's which she attended in state, the party in power did all that in them lay to depreciate the importance of the victory. When, however, Marlborough appeared in England with his prisoners and trophies—a marshal of France, and many standards taken in the field—the popular sentiment burst all bounds, and his reception was enthusiastic. The Crown lands of Woodstock were bestowed upon him, and the queen herself commanded a palace to be built upon that estate at the expense of the Crown, to be called Blenheim, in commemoration of this extraordinary victory. The quit-rent for this royal fief was to be a banner em-

broidered with three fleurs-de-lis, the then cognisance of France, to be presented on every anniversary of the battle. Not very long ago the present writer accompanied a French lady of distinction through some part of Windsor Castle under the guidance of a high official. When the party came into the armoury, on each side of which, a vivid spot of colour, hung a little standard, fresh in embroidery of gold, the kind cicerone smiled and whispered aside, 'We need not point out these to her.' One of them was the Blenheim, the other the Waterloo banner, both yearly acknowledgments, after the old feudal fashion, for fiefs held of the Crown.

One of the other honours done to Marlborough at this triumphant moment when, an English duke, a prince of the holy Roman Empire, the greatest soldier of his time, he came home in glory to England, were the well-known verses with which Addison saluted him. There were plenty of odes piping to all the winds in his honour, but this alone worthy of record. After describing the events by which 'great Marlborough's mighty soul was proved'—the bold and splendid image with which he concludes has definitively taken its place in English poetry :—

> 'So when an angel by divine command
> With rising tempests shakes a guilty land,
> Such as of late o'er pale Britannia past,
> Calm and serene he drives the furious blast,
> And pleased the Almighty's orders to perform,
> Rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm.'

There is a greater amount of truth than is usual in complimentary verses comparing men to angels in this description. Whatever Marlborough's faults may have

been, his attitude during this wonderful war is scarcely too magnificently described by the image of a calm and superior spirit beholding contemporary events from a higher altitude than that of common men, executing vengeance, and causing destruction without either rage or fear, in serene fulfilment of a great command, and in pursuance of a noble purpose. His unbroken temper his patience and courtesy in the midst of all contentions, the fine composure with which he supports all the burdens thrown upon him, appeals from home as well as necessities abroad, might well suggest a spirit apart and independent, not moved like lesser men. No man ever bore so many conflicting claims more calmly, and his prudence was equal to his endurance: even the adjurations, the commands, the special pleadings of his 'dearest soul,' do not lead him a step further than he thinks wise. 'When I differ from you,' he says, 'it is not that I think those are in the right whom you say are always in the wrong; but it is that I would be glad not to enter into the unreasonable reasoning of either party: for I have trouble enough for my little head in the business which of necessity I must do here.' There could not be a greater contrast than between the commotion and whirlwind that surrounds Duchess Sarah and the great general's calm.

It is not necessary for our purpose to enter into those changes of ministers which temporarily consolidated the Marlborough interest, but only to yield again to the opposing party. It is not to be supposed that these fluctuations were wholly owing to the influences

brought to bear upon the queen; but that her personal dispositions influenced public matters in a way almost inconceivable to us is very evident, as also that her prevailing disposition to uphold the party which to her represented the Church kept the continuance of the war and the entire policy of the country in constant danger.

Even this, however, is not so full of interest for our present purpose as the revelation of another side of Anne's nature which gradually becomes apparent in the course of the heated discussions that rise about her. The yielding and gentle temper, the humility of mind and softness of disposition, the clinging affectionateness and self-devotion which formed the better side of her character have been fully evident in the first half of her career: but that underneath those lovable qualities there was a narrowness and obstinacy, a sullen incapacity to be reasoned with or convinced by any argument, were things which had showed very rarely, and then only in circumstances which made them half virtues. But there is nothing so remorseless, so inaccessible as weakness when once it has turned to bay. Even so dull a brain as Anne's could scarcely fail at last to receive the impression of the despotism and coercion increasing every day, which her friend, spoilt on her side by continual indulgence, now exercised over her. The placid soul was slow to take that new imprint, but when it had done so was like steel in the novel attitude into which she had been forced, and from which, once taken, no manipulation would move her. The process was probably a slower one than we can follow, and many

a line had been scored in the once so plastic material before it suddenly stiffened into the permanent mould, and became like a rock amid all the violences of the waves, unmoved by them, however high they might dash and rage. It is the most curious sight to see Anne's soft and smiling countenance turn into that mask of sullen obstinacy, and her easy too-persuadable mind shut itself up in bolts and bars against every influence. Reason had held no great sway over her at any time. She had yielded to it when it bore a form she loved, she was as adamant to it when it had no such recommendation; and it is almost appalling to see this other side of the narrow and limited nature turned to us, dull, immovable, which had once been so smiling and so bright, yet to know that the brightness had involved the gloom all the time. The duchess, though violent, is more or less as she always is through the whole: it is in Anne, the stupid and gentle, that the mystery of a complete revolution appears.

It is only in 1707, five years after Anne's accession, that we are made aware of the entry of a new actor upon the scene in the person of a smooth and noiseless woman, always civil, always soft spoken, apologetic, and plausible, whose sudden appearance in the vivid narrative of her great rival is in the highest degree dramatic and effective. This was the famous Abigail who has given her name, somewhat injuriously to her own position, to the class of waiting-women ever since. She was in reality bed-chamber woman to the queen, a post now very far removed from that of waiting-maid, and even then by no means on the level, notwithstanding the

duchess's scornful phrases, of those attendants to whom has been appropriated Mrs. Hill's remarkable name. Her introduction altogether and the vigorous *mise en scène* of this new episode in the history prove a high quality of dramatic workmanship in Duchess Sarah. Her suspicions, she informs us, were roused by the information that this personage had been privately married to Mr. Masham, who was one of the queen's pages; but there are allusions before this in her letters to the queen to 'flatterers,' which point at least to some suspected influence undermining her own. She tells us first in a few succinct pages who the person was whose private marriage excited so much wonder and indignation in her mind. Abigail Hill was the first cousin of Sarah Jennings, the daughter of her father's sister, a lady who as being one of twenty-two children had but 'five hundred pounds for her portion,' yet was of as good blood as the duchess herself, though she had married 'a merchant in the city' and fallen into poverty. Lady Churchill, then young, recently married, and but lately appointed to Princess Anne's household, heard accidentally of these poor relations of whom she had known nothing, and immediately sent them money, and took upon herself the charge of the eldest daughter, who henceforward lived with her, taking care of her children, and treated, she tells us, as her sister, until, a vacancy occurring among the princess's bedchamber women, she asked for and obtained the appointment for Abigail. The rest of the family seem also to have owed their establishment in life to the active generosity of the duchess. The younger sister was made laundress

to the Duke of Rochester (not a very dignified office, though no doubt its duties were done by proxy), and afterwards pensioned. The elder son got a post in the custom-house; the younger Lady Marlborough put to school at St. Albans under her own eye, and clothed and cared for with ill-repaid kindness. Thus she had been the making of the family, and her discovery of the secret marriage, which no doubt gave force to other suspicions, was an irritating incident. Harley, who was at this time Secretary of State and aiming at higher place, was related in the same degree on the father's side to Mrs. Abigail; so that, first cousin to the great duchess on one hand and to the leader of the House of Commons on the other, though it suits the narrator's purpose to humble her, Mrs. Hill was no child of the people. It is curious to remark here that Harley too had come to his advancement by Marlborough's means, who did not for a long time cease to trust in him.

'The first thing which led me into inquiries about her conduct was the being told that my cousin Hill was privately married to Mr. Masham. I went to her and asked her if it were true; she owned it was, and begged my pardon for having concealed it from me. As much reason as I had to take ill this reserve in her behaviour, I was willing to impute it to bashfulness and want of breeding, rather than to anything worse. I embraced her with my usual tenderness, and very heartily wished her joy; and then, turning the discourse, entered into her concerns in as friendly a manner as possible, contriving how to accommodate her with lodgings by removing her sister into some of my own. I then inquired of her kindly whether the queen knew of her marriage, and very innocently offered her my service if she needed it to make that matter easy. She had by this time learnt the art of

dissimulation pretty well, and answered with an air of unconcernedness, that the bedchamber women had already acquainted the queen with it, hoping by this answer to divert any further examination into the matter. But I went presently to the queen, and asked her why she had not been so kind as to tell me of my cousin's marriage, expostulating with her upon the point, and putting her in mind of what she used often to say to me out of Montaigne, that it was no breach of promise of secrecy to tell such a friend anything, because it was no more than telling it to one's-self. All the answer I could obtain from her majesty was this, "I have a hundred times bid Masham tell it you, and she would not."'

These curious circumstances piqued the duchess's curiosity, who never let the grass grow under her feet, and soon she discovered that the private marriage had been celebrated at Windsor in the rooms of Dr. Arbuthnot, and that the queen herself had honoured the occasion by her own presence; also that Abigail had 'become an absolute favourite' and spent hours alone with the queen, and that the other cousin on the other side of the house, the ambitious Harley, had been through her brought into closer relations with their royal mistress. This on a sudden cleared up all that was mysterious in the severance which had gradually been taking place between Mrs. Freeman and her unfortunate faithful Morley. The friend of her youth, whose frank dictation the Princess Anne had received with such tender docility, had evidently hurt the queen's pride when Anne began in her humility to entertain and act upon opinions of her own. And Mrs. Abigail was gentle and insinuating, a creature who stole about the dull rooms and up the back stairs with

noiseless steps of velvet, and took her majesty's opinions for gospel, and no doubt now and then ventured a scoff at her imperious cousin, or told some gossip's tale of her which diverted her majesty and permitted her the guilty pleasure of a laugh at the infallible. The duchess had been just then interfering with one of Anne's most cherished privileges—the appointment of bishops, which she was anxious to keep in her own hands—and indeed had hectored and bullied the queen in a way which the meekest of women could scarcely bear with tranquillity. 'Mrs. Morley,' she says on one occasion, 'has never been able to answer any argument, or to say anything that has the least colour of reason in it, and yet will not be advised by those that have given the greatest demonstrations imaginable of being in her interest.' After reading such a sentence as this in a long and vehement letter, it would be little wonder if the queen, all tears and outraged feeling, had retired to the soothing of the kinder attendant who would take her part and soothe her ruffled pride.

From the moment of this discovery Duchess Sarah gave her mistress little peace. Fiery letters fast and furious were showered upon the queen; nothing was allowed to pass without a hasty visit, a long epistle. If it were not for the wearisome pertinacity with which people in a quarrel return to one subject, these letters, so vigorous and full of force, would be equally full of interest; and evidently (as is very usual in a quarrel) it was a pleasure to the duchess to pour forth page upon page, flying to her desk at every new incident with the hot and eager pleasure of controversy, delighting to

show Godolphin, or even Marlborough, though so much further off, how she had confuted all her adversaries. But the record of stormy scenes, one following another, is apt to become monotonous in the end. The duchess could never accept defeat. Every new affront, every symptom of failure in the policy which she supported with so much zeal, made her fly, if possible, to the presence of the queen, with a storm of remonstrances, reproaches and invective, with tears of fury and outcries of wrath; or to the pen, with which she reiterated the same burning story of her wrongs. The appearance of the queen throughout has a stolid and passive resistance in it which gives us a certain sympathy with the weeping, raging, passionate woman, whose eloquence, whose arguments, whose appeals and entreaties all dash unheeded against the rock of tranquil obstinacy which is no more moved by them than the cliff is moved by the petulances of the rising tide; though on the other hand the same sympathy may be called forth for the dull and placid soul which could get no rest, and which longed above all things for tranquillity, for gentle attentions and soft voices, and the privilege of nominating bishops and playing basset in peace. Poor lady! on the whole it is Queen Anne who is the most to be pitied. She was often ill, always unwieldy and uncomfortable; she had nobody but a soft, gliding, smooth-tongued Abigail to fall back upon, while the duchess had half the great men of the time fawning upon her, putting themselves at her feet, her husband prizing a word of kindness from her more than anything in the world, her daughter describing her as the dearest mother that ever was; and money accumu-

lating in her coffers and great Blenheim still a-building, and all kinds of noble hangings, cut velvets and satins, pictures and every fine thing that could be conceived getting collected for the adornment of that great house.

Nevertheless there can be little doubt that Duchess Sarah represented a nobler idea and a grander national policy than that into which her mistress was betrayed. Her later intercourse with Anne was little more than a persecution, and yet what she aimed at was better than the dishonouring and selfish policy by which she was finally conquered. The Marlboroughs were not of those who pressed the German heir upon the queen, or would have compelled her to receive that visit which she passionately declared she could not bear; but they were determined, all treasonable correspondence notwithstanding, upon the maintenance of the Protestant succession, upon the firm establishment of English independence and greatness—the objects which alone had justified the Revolution, and made the stern chapter of William's life and reign anything better than an accidental episode. Though he had been false to William, as everybody was false in those days, and had lain so long in the cold shade of his displeasure, Marlborough had in his whole magnificent career been little more than the executor of William's plans, the fulfiller of his policy. The duchess on her side, with much love of power and of gain, with all the drawbacks of her temper and personality, still bent every faculty to the work of backing him up, keeping his friends in power and his enemies harmless, and thus bringing the war to an entirely successful conclusion. A certain enlightenment was in all her passionate interferences

with the course of public affairs. The men whom she laboured to thrust into office were the best men of their time, the ascendency she endeavoured so violently to retain was one under which England had been elevated in the scale of nations, and all her liberties confirmed. Such persecuting and intolerant acts as the bill against Occasional Conformity, which was a test of exceptional severity, had her strenuous opposition. In short, had there been no Marlborough to carry on the war at William's death, and no Sarah at Anne's ear, to inspire the queen's sluggish nature with spirit and to keep her up to the mark of the larger plans of her predecessor, England might have fallen into another drivelling period of foreign subserviency, into a new and meaner Restoration.

That the reader may see, however, to what an extraordinary pass the friendship had come which had been so intimate and close, we add the duchess's account of the concluding interview. In the meantime, it need not be said, many exasperating circumstances of all kinds had accumulated between the former friends. There had been violent meetings, violent letters by the score; even in the midst of a thanksgiving service Sarah had taken her mistress to task, and imperiously bidden her not to answer. Indeed the poor queen was more or less hunted down, pursued to her last circle of defence, when the Mistress of the Robes made her sudden appearance at Kensington one April afternoon, in the year 1710, when everything was tending towards her downfall.

'As I was entering the queen said she was just going to write to me. And when I began to speak she interrupted me

four or five times with these repeated words: "Whatever you have to say you may put it in writing." I said her majesty never did so hard a thing to any, as to refuse to hear them speak, and assured her that I was not going to trouble her upon the subject which I knew to be so ungrateful to her, but that I could not possibly rest till I had cleared myself from some particular calumnies with which I had been loaded. I then went on to speak (though the queen turned away her face from me) and to represent my hard case, that there were those about her majesty who had made her believe that I said things of her, which I was no more capable of saying than of killing my own children . . . The queen said, without doubt there were many lies told. I then begged, in order to make this trouble the shorter and my own innocence the plainer, that I might know the particulars of which I had been accused. Because if I were guilty that would quickly appear, and if I were innocent this method alone would clear me. The queen replied that she would give me no answer, laying hold on a word in my letter, that what I had to say in my own vindication *would have no consequence in obliging her majesty to answer*, etc., which surely did not at all imply that I did not desire to know the particular things laid to my charge, without which it was impossible for me to clear myself. This I assured her majesty was all I desired, and that I did not ask the names of the authors or relaters of those calumnies, saying all that I could think reasonable to enforce my just request . . . . I protested to her majesty that I had no design, in giving her this trouble, to solicit the return of her favour, but that my sole view was to clear myself; which was too just a design to be wholly disappointed by her majesty. Upon this the queen offered to go out of the room, I following her, and begging leave to clear myself; and the queen repeating over and over again: "You desired no answer, and shall have none." When she came to the door I fell into great disorder; streams of tears flowed down against my will, and prevented my speaking for some time. At length I recovered myself and appealed to the queen, in the vehemence of my concern, whether

I might not still have been happy in her majesty's favour, if I could have contradicted or dissembled my real opinion of men, or things? whether I had ever, during our long friendship, told her one lie, or played the hypocrite once? whether I had offended in anything, unless in a very zealous pressing upon her that which I thought necessary for her service and security? I then said I was informed by a very reasonable and credible person about the court that things were laid to my charge of which I was wholly incapable; that this person knew that such stories were perpetually told to her majesty to incense her, and had begged of me to come and vindicate myself; that the same person had thought me of late guilty of some omissions towards her majesty, being entirely ignorant how uneasy to her my frequent attendance must be, after what had happened between us. I explained some things which I had heard her majesty had taken amiss of me, and then, with a fresh flood of tears and a concern sufficient to move compassion, even where all love was absent, I begged to know what other particulars she had heard of me, that I might not be denied all power of justifying myself. But still the only return was: "You desired no answer, and you shall have none." I then begged to know if her majesty would tell me some other time? "You desired no answer, and you shall have none." I then appealed to her majesty again, if she did not herself know that I had often despised interest in comparison of serving her faithfully and doing right? and whether she did not know me to be of a temper incapable of disowning anything which I knew to be true? "You desired no answer, and you shall have none." This usage was so severe, and these words, so often repeated, were so shocking (being an utter denial of common justice to one who had been a most faithful servant, and now asked nothing more), that I could not conquer myself, but said the most disrespectful thing I ever spoke to the queen in my life, and yet, what such an occasion and such circumstances might well excuse, if not justify; and that was, that "I was confident her majesty would suffer for such an instance of inhumanity." The queen answered: "That

will be to myself." Thus ended this remarkable conversation, the last I ever had with her majesty.'

After this there was no reconciliation possible; attempts of all kinds were made, and there is even a record of a somewhat pitiful scene in which great Marlborough himself, on his return from the wars, appears on his knees pleading with Queen Anne to take back into favour her old companion, but without effect. The reason of this unbecoming humility however was, not the great general's desire to force his wife upon her majesty, but the general sense of all that his own services were indispensable to the country, and that he could hardly continue in his position if his wife's dismissal actually took place. But Queen Anne stood immovable before great Marlborough on his knees, and whereas she had demanded the gold key which was the duchess's symbol of office in three days, now insisted that it should be delivered to her within two, by way of showing how little weight she attached to the prayers of the commander-in-chief. Coxe says that it was sent back the same evening in indignant resentment when Duchess Sarah knew what had happened, and Lord Dartmouth in those curious gossiping comments on Burnet's history which throw so much light upon the transactions of the time, affords a brief but graphic picture of her grace's final yielding. 'When the Duke of Marlborough told her the queen expected the gold key, she took it from her side and threw it into the middle of the room, and bid him take it up and carry it to whom he pleased.' The state of furious excitement in which she was is

described in another note, which no doubt affords a very fair idea of the agitated house which was all the great general had at this moment to represent the peace and tranquillity for which in all his letters he sighs.

'Lord Cowper told me he went at this time to the Duke of Marlborough and found him in bed, with a great deal of company in his chamber, and the duchess sitting at his bedside, railing in a most extravagant manner against the queen, and said she had always hated and despised her: but that fool, her daughter Henrietta (who stood by) had always loved her, and did so still, which she should never forgive her. That surprised him very much, though he had heard more of her temper than he believed; but the duke told him he must not mind what she said, for she was used to talk at that rate when she was in a passion, which was a thing she was very apt to fall into, and there was no way to help it.'

Marlborough unfortunately for himself did not resign at this turning-point, being persuaded both by friends and foes not to do so; and with the evident risk before his eyes of hazarding all the combinations of the war and giving a distinct advantage to the enemy against whom he had hitherto operated so forcibly. He continued therefore for the public interest rather than for his own, and returned when the season of warfare recommenced to the post which all these events made uneasy for him, and where his credit was shaken and his prestige diminished by the disfavour of the Court and the ministry, and all the indignities to which he had been subjected. The responsibility was therefore left upon Anne and her ministers of dismissing

him, which they accordingly did in the end of 1711, to the consternation of the allies, the delight of the French, and the bewilderment of the nation. The party plots by which this came about are far too long and involved to be capable of explanation here, as are also the semi-secret negotiations for the peace secured by the Treaty of Utrecht, which were carried on unknown to Marlborough, to the destruction of the alliance and confusion of all his plans. Never perhaps was so great a man treated with such contumely. His associate in his work, the Lord Treasurer Godolphin, the great financier of his time, had already fallen, leaving office so poor a man that he would have been dependent upon the Marlboroughs but for the unexpected death of his brother, which left him the possessor of a small fortune. To show the manner in which in those days ministers fell, we may cite the final end of Godolphin after a period of wavering tenure and failing favour.

'From the queen's coldness, from the secret opposition to which he here adverts and from other causes, the Treasurer seems to have suspected her intention to dismiss him; for the same day he had another audience of two hours in which he took the resolution of representing the mischievous consequences of secret counsels, and her want of confidence in her ostensible ministers. He concluded with submitting to her decision whether he should continue in office, offering to serve or not, as she should deem it fit for her interest, concluding with the categorical question, 'Is it the will of your majesty that I should go on?' The queen replied without hesitation 'Yes.' With this answer the minister was satisfied and quitted her presence, though he observed in her looks and manners unusual symptoms of

embarrassment and gloom. He was therefore equally surprised and confounded when the next morning a servant in the royal livery left a note with his porter dated on the evening after the audience.

'Kensington, August 7th (1710).—The uneasiness which you have showed for some time has given me very much trouble, though I have borne it; and had your behaviour continued the same as it was for some years after my coming to the crown, I could have no dispute with myself what to do. But the many unkind returns I have received since, especially what you said to me personally before the lords, makes it impossible for me to continue you any longer in my service; but I will give you a pension of four thousand a year, and I desire that instead of bringing your staff to me, you will break it, which I believe will be easier to us both.'

Here we see that instead of a government hanging together and going out and in by parliamentary action in a body, the ministry was composed of independent individuals, each of whom his colleagues, taking advantage of the mood of majesty, could push out of his position when occasion served. Thus man after man was discharged from the queen's service, always with some personal offence on his part to give colour to the dismissal. Anne herself was no doubt little more than a puppet in the hands of successive ministers; but yet the fight there was around her, the maintenance by every circle of somebody who could influence her, the conflict for her ear and favour show her immense importance in the economy of public life. Queen Victoria is the object of universal veneration and respect, but not the smallest official in her government need fear the displeasure of the queen, as the highest minister

had to fear the offence of Anne, for whom no one entertained any particular respect.

And yet there are no indications of an evil nature in the unfortunate woman who, badgered on all sides and refused both peace and rest, sank slowly into disease and decay during the two years which followed the disgrace of the friend of her youth. She had no longer an audacious Freeman, once adored, to tell her unwelcome truths and tease her with appeals and reproaches. Her soft-voiced Abigail, her cunning Duchess (of Somerset) gave her flattery and soothing at home, but never was a head that wore the crown more uneasy. She held fast to the power which she had been persuaded she was to get into her own hands when she was delivered from the sway of the Marlboroughs, and believed it possible that she could reign unaided, which brought her many mortifications. Her death was hastened, it is said, at last by a violent altercation in her presence between Harley and St. John, when the inevitable moment came of conflict between the two who had pushed all competitors out of place. They wrangled over the staff of office in Anne's very presence, overwhelming her with agitation and excitement. But for these wild waves of political tumult which poured on her from time to time, her royal existence was dull enough. When Dean Swift was hanging on at Windsor, following Harley and waiting for the decision of his Irish business, he affords us occasional glimpses which show the tedium of the court. 'There was a drawing-room to-day,' he says, 'but so few company that the queen sent for us into her bed-

chamber, where we made our bows, and stood about twenty of us round the room while she looked at us round with her fan in her mouth, and once a minute said about three words to some that were nearest her, and then she was told dinner was ready and went out.' The same authority mentions her way of taking exercise, which was a strange one. 'The queen was hunting the stag till four this afternoon,' he says, 'and she drove in her chaise about forty miles, and it was five before we went to dinner.' 'She hunts in a chaise with one horse which she drives herself, and drives furiously like Jehu, and is a mighty hunter like Nimrod.' Windsor's great park and forest must have afforded room and space for some part at least of this course, and a hunt in August would need to have been confined to ground less cultivated than that of the smiling plain which skirts the castle hill on the other side. Queen Anne's ride and Queen Anne's drive are still well-known names in the locality where the strange apparition of the queen, solitary in her high chaise, and 'driving furiously' after the hunt, must once have been a familiar sight.

Her ending days were agitated, above and beside all the tumults of party in which she took so continual a part, by private and public contentions over the question of her successor. In public there was but one name that any one ventured to name, which was that of the family of Hanover, the Electress Sophia and her son and grandson, who were prayed for in the churches, and recognised by acts of parliament and by the general consent of England. Anne did not love the idea of a

successor at all. She had declared to Marlborough passionately that such a thing as the visit of the Hanoverian prince in the capacity of heir was a thing she could not bear, not for a week; and a severe letter which she wrote on the subject to his grandmother, the old Electress Sophia, was supposed to have had some share in causing the old lady's death. But indoors in the secret chambers and by the backstairs came whispers now of another name, that of James Stewart, more familiar and kindly, the boy-brother whom Anne had believed the prevailing fable about, for whom she had invented the name of the Pretender, but who now in her childless decay began to present himself to her as the victim of a great wrong. Poor queen! she was torn asunder by all these crosses and contradictions, her heart melting towards her father's son, her intellect perceiving that he was impossible, her confidante urging every argument in his favour upon her. Marlborough first with all his faction and his foes, then Harley and St. John quarrelling in her very presence-chamber; and when the closet door was shut and the curtains drawn, and all the world shut out save Abigail lying on a mattress on the floor to be near her mistress, then would come up the most momentous question of all: the Stewart or the German! Little wonder if Anne was harassed beyond all endurance, and the powers of life worn out before their time. The hopes of the Jacobite party were rising higher every day as the end approached; but the other side were on the alert, and George I. was peacefully proclaimed as soon as the queen out of her lethargy had slipped beyond the boundaries of any earthly kingdom.

The Marlboroughs, who had been living on the Continent since their disgrace, came back with this new change. The duke's entry into London, 'in great state, attended by hundreds of gentlemen on horseback, and some of the nobility in their coaches,' a few days after, is reported by one of the chroniclers of the time. The duchess followed him soon after; and whether her temper and disposition had so far mended as to allow him to enjoy the peace he had so often hoped for by the side of her he loved, he had at least a tranquil evening-time among his friends and dependents, and the grandchildren who were to be his heirs, for only one of his own children survived at his death. Duchess Sarah lived long after him. She was sixty-two when he died, but nevertheless, in spite of temper and every other failing, was still charming enough to be sought in marriage by two distinguished suitors, one of them that proud Duke of Somerset, whose wife had supplanted her at court, and who must have known everything about Sarah of Marlborough. She answered this potentate in the only way consistent with the dignity of a woman of her age and circumstances, but added, with a noble pride which sat well upon her, that had she been but half her age, not the emperor of the world should ever have filled the place sacred to great Marlborough. It is a pity we could not leave her here in this glow of proud tenderness and constancy. She was capable of that, and many other noble things; but not of holding her tongue, of withdrawing into the background, or accepting in other ways the natural change from maturity to age. Her restless energies had some legitimate outlets. She finished Blenheim. She wrote

innumerable explanations, memorandums, finally shaping themselves into that 'Account of the conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough from her first coming to court,' which is one of the most interesting of all *mémoires pour servir.* This was published in her eighty-second year, and it is curious to think of the vivacious and unsubdued spirit which could throw itself back so completely out of the calm of age into the conflicts and the very atmosphere of what had passed thirty years before. And she did her utmost to prepare for a great life of Marlborough, which should set her hero right with the world. But her time was not always so innocently employed, and it is to be feared that she wrangled to the end of her life. The 'Characters' of her contemporaries which she left behind are full of spite and malice. There was no peace in her soul. A characteristic little story is told of her in an illness. 'Last year she had lain a great while ill without speaking: her physician said she must be blistered or she would die; she called out, "I won't be blistered, and I won't die!"' and apparently for the moment kept her word. She lived long enough to be impaled by Pope, in verses which an involuntary admiration for this daring, dauntless, impassioned woman makes us reluctant to quote. She survived almost her entire generation, and was capable of living a hundred years more had nature permitted. She was eighty-four when she succumbed at last in the year 1744, thirty years after the death of her queen.

# THE QUAKER

## I

It is perhaps straining a little the limits of a historical period to place William Penn among the characteristic figures of the reign of Anne. His active career was almost over by the time she came to the throne, and he had little to do with the public service, and nothing at all with the perfidies and intrigues of the time. He belongs, however, to the last fatal and melancholy chapter of the history of the Stewarts which ends in her; and in many of the scenes through which we have tried to trace her uncertain figure was an actor more conspicuous and interesting. The paradox which his life presents is chiefly brought about by his attachment to the race, or at least to one, the least attractive member of it. No more strange position could well be than that in which he stands, attached at once to the old and the new world—the founder of a republic, the courtier of a tyrannical monarch: a rebel against not only rule but courteous custom, and all the gentle traditions of social respect: and yet the partisan and counsellor of the last king who has tried to maintain absolute power and divine right in England. The antagonistic forces between which he stood, sympathising with both, not only

combated but denounced each other as the accursed thing, and tore the world asunder, without disturbing the faith or losing the support of this man—at once a Quaker and a Cavalier, a missionary preaching to the poor and an agent in the intrigues of a tyrant.

It may lessen the wonder somewhat when we know that the tyrant whom he served was a fatherly friend, showing his best side to the eyes of his champion; and that Penn's republic was tempered by the intended supremacy of a governor paternal and authoritative. But, when all is said that can be said, his life remains a problem, full of contradictions, which it is sometimes difficult to reconcile with entire good faith—contradictions so undisguised and simple that they suggest a *naïveté* and artlessness of character scarcely compatible with the knowledge and experience of a man of the world. That this simple explanation might be the last word of the enigma is, however, not an explanation likely to content the world, which believes in everything rather than in simplicity of mind—a quality indeed not much to be expected from a man who had known the court of Charles and lived in that of James, and acquired polish and grace in the society of Versailles in the great days of Louis Quatorze. Notwithstanding the contradictions in his life, no one has received a more abundant meed of approval and admiration in history. We may take from Macaulay, who is not his friend nor favourable to him, a summary of Penn's great reputation, made with that brilliancy of words, in those finely balanced sentences which linger on the ear, and sway the judgment more or less, even when the sense is

WILLIAM PENN

*Portrait in the National Museum, Philadelphia*

little in accord with the reader's prepossessions ; for who can altogether refuse to be affected by what is so finely said? In the present case no lover of Penn will object to the terms in which his great critic sets him forth.

'England is proud of his name. A great Commonwealth beyond the Atlantic regards him with a reverence similar to that which the Athenians felt for Theseus, and the Romans for Quirinus. The respectable society of which he was a member honours him as an apostle. By pious men of other persuasions he is generally regarded as a bright pattern of Christian virtue. Meanwhile admirers of a very different sort have sounded his praises. The French philosophers of the eighteenth century pardoned what they considered his superstitious fancies in consideration of his contempt for priests and of his cosmopolitan benevolence, impartially extended to all men and all creeds. His name has thus become a synonym for polity and philanthropy.'

So splendid a reputation can scarcely exist without assailants and detractors, and in human nature there is always alloy ; but the consent of so many authorities is a guarantee of fame, and the tradition of faith in the founder of an ideal community is hard to break. No one is likely again to attack the reputation of the great Quaker with more fervour or greater power than Macaulay, and Macaulay's assault cannot be said to have been successful. It threw an unpleasant doubt upon some passages in the life of the courtier-evangelist which had always been questionable, and it made perhaps more evident the ambiguous character of certain exceptional acts ; but there was nothing more to be done, and even Macaulay could do no more.

William Penn was the eldest son of a sailor distin-

guished in his generation, a self-made man of extraordinary energy, and determination to advance himself and his belongings in the world. They were descended from a family of homely but undeniable gentry; yet the father of Sir William was but a merchant captain, and the future admiral received his earliest training in the rough and often dangerous work of a trading vessel. His training cannot, however, have lasted long, since he is recorded as having been a captain at twenty-one, Rear-Admiral (of Ireland) at twenty-three, and to have obtained the final distinction of Vice-Admiral of England at the early age of thirty-one. Like so many of his time, he had alternated between the Commonwealth and the King, according as one or the other came uppermost, but with so much more excuse than most, that a sailor employed against the enemies of his country in general may well believe his duty on the high seas to be little affected by political changes even of the greatest magnitude at home. At all events it is evident that he was thought none the worse of at the court of Charles II. in consequence of his commerce with the Protector, and that the restored king had the good sense to see that a capable man was worth securing at a time when there were not many such, and the prestige of England on the seas, as well as elsewhere, had fallen so much. Mr. Samuel Pepys, that great authority upon the men of his time, did not like Sir William, who was hot-tempered and something of a marplot in society, checking the gaiety of a merry party when he appeared, and in public matters interfering with my Lord of Sandwich and others of Mr. Pepys's friends in the navy; so that

there is no very favourable account of the admiral to be obtained from him. But it seems acknowledged that he was a good sailor among many who were not good, and took a considerable part in the naval movements—which were not, however, of a nature of which Englishmen can be proud. At all events he was a highly successful man, and had every reason to hope that his son, following in his steps, with the favour of the king and the heir to the throne, might become a very important person, and carry the family fortunes high. There was even word of a peerage in those days, and, with court favour, everything was possible to a man who knew how to take advantage of the opportunities before him.

Young Penn, however, as it turned out, was in many respects of a very different nature from his father. While the sailor was fighting his way into notice and credit, often absent at sea, and pushing to the front when at home among courtiers and place-hunters, his boy had been quietly bred under influences more salutary. Perhaps his Dutch mother, of whom there is little record, had tempered with mild Teutonic sentimentalism, and religious visionariness, the energetic development of the paternal race. When he told the story of his conversion to the noble ladies whom he visited as an evangelist in Germany, many years later, he informed them that 'the Lord first appeared to me *anno* 1655, which was about the twelfth year of my age.' At this early period, we are told by his biographers, he was not only 'suddenly surprised with an inward comfort' but beheld 'an external glory in the room,' which proved

the reality of the visitation. These experiences continued till his fifteenth year, during which time he was educated partly at Chigwell Grammar School in Essex, and partly in Ireland, whither the family had removed, a grant of an Irish estate having been made to the admiral. William Penn was but fifteen when he was sent to Oxford, where the only proof of his scholarship that has been preserved is a copy of Latin verses written on the occasion of the death of the Duke of Gloucester, which is not inferior to the average of sixth form compositions. He does not seem to have been an idle boy, since he is reported to have made good progress both in classical and modern languages, and though he is said to have been disorderly, it was not at all in the usual way. He was fined with several others for absenting himself from chapel, and frequenting instead the preaching of a poor and unknown notary called Thomas Fox, a member of the new sect of Quakers, whose tenets, especially concerning vestments and external decorations, pleased the lads all the more that orders had come from court (as was said) to enforce the wearing of the gown by the undergraduates. It would be curious to inquire why this regulation should have always been so distasteful to the young men at our universities; perhaps in the present day the extreme ugliness of the garment in use may afford a reason, but in Penn's day the robe was full and flowing. The youths of Puritan tastes, however, those whose training still retained the bias of the Commonwealth, and whose fathers had shed their blood in opposition to the vanities of vestments, mitres, and crowns, were roused to

boyish passion by this order. Perhaps the pleasure of a row, which nature at sixteen, however pious, loves, added to the force of religio-political sentiment. 'The youngsters paraded the streets in a threatening manner,' says Mr. Hepworth Dixon. 'They not only refused to wear the gown themselves, but they declared war against all who did.' 'Tearing' the gowns 'everywhere over their heads,' says another authority, which it must be allowed was a strong measure. Young Oxford now, though it shirks the use of its academical costume by every ingenious device, has no thought of going so far as this. But it would appear that Penn's mind was peculiarly sensitive on the point of costume. The university of Oxford has been unfortunate in its victims, and Penn is an instance in point. He and his fellow rioters were summarily expelled by their colleges, and thus his university career and the rebellion against the gown came to a premature end.

Such an event is always terrible to a parent. It looks like disgrace even when to the consciousness of the young hero it is a holy martyrdom—and ruin to the career which seems thus nipped in the bud. The admiral was very angry, and for a time the young man's fate was uncertain. Sir William consulted Pepys about sending his son to Cambridge, always considered by her children as more wise, as well as more liberal, than Oxford. This, 'I now perceive, is the cause that hath put Sir William so long off the hooks,' Pepys says when finally taken into the admiral's confidence. Transgressions to be forgiven and debts to be paid would have been more in his way, and would not have spoilt

the boy's career as this peevish Puritanism was likely to do. Sir William, however, was better inspired than to wait till the naval secretary could remember a tutor at Cambridge to whose care to commit the rebel. He adopted the expedient of sending his son off to France, a plan which seemed for a time to be thoroughly successful. Young Penn appeared at the splendid court of the Grand Monarque with all the advantages which his father's position could secure to him, and made acquaintance with all that was fine and glorious in the gay capital, the very centre of the world for pleasure and grandeur, in which there was as yet no whisper of retribution to come. He was but seventeen, a little too young for the rôle of hero, but that is a fault which is easily pardoned; and young Penn fell into the ways of his kind, and received his initiation into fine society without any protest against the splendours and luxuries around him. Perhaps he felt that in a country not his own his conscience was clear of responsibility, and that Paris was not likely to be moved out of her gay course by anything he could do or say.

After this brilliant beginning, the young man went to the country, to Saumur, where he pursued his studies under a famous scholar, a French Calvinist professor, then much frequented by young men in search of learning. He returned to London in about two years with much increase in knowledge, and still more in what his father prized most, the accomplishments proper to his age and position. 'His carriage was such as justly entitled him to the character of a compleat young gentleman,' says an early and anonymous biographer.

SIR WILLIAM PENN

*Sir Peter Lely, pinx. From the picture in Greenwich Hospital*

Indeed Mr. Pepys found him almost too fine a gallant. 'Comes Mr. Penn to visit me,' he says, 'I perceive some thing of learning he hath got; but a great deal, if not too much of the vanity of the French garb, and affected manner of speech and gait.' Mrs. Pepys was of a similar opinion without the censure. 'Young Mr. Penn is a most modish person grown,' she says, 'a fine gentleman.' The agreement of two such authorities, both with a secret grudge against the admiral, which no doubt extended to his son, may be taken as the most complete of testimonials. And no doubt the father's mind was relieved and triumphant, arguing everything that was successful for the youthful hero. Sir William was then at the very height of his own reputation and importance, just setting out on the great expedition against the Dutch, which a little consoled England in her low estate, and felt like one of her accustomed triumphs. The Duke of York was the nominal head of the fleet, but Sir William accompanied him with the somewhat magniloquent title of 'Great Captain Commander,' and naturally was the real leader of the expedition. In his paternal pride and pleasure he took young William with him, in the 'Royal Charles,' where the young man remained for about three weeks in constant intercourse with the brilliant staff which surrounded the Duke of York. No better opportunity could have been for presenting him to the notice of James, with whom old Penn was clearly a great favourite. When the impression he desired had been thus made, the clever admiral sent his son home with despatches to the king, carrying news of some successful skirmishings with the

enemy. Charles got out of bed in his eagerness to receive the report of the young emissary, and gave him a most gracious reception. That William Penn should in after days recall these memories warmly, and see in the bigot and would-be despot, James II., the same face as that which had looked so kindly on his youth, is not a thing at which any one need to wonder, were it not that loyal personal regard of any kind was rare and feeble in those days.

The admiral himself returned home shortly after at the height of triumph, having achieved a great victory over the Dutch, though that misguided nation, as Pepys tells us, would not allow it, but claimed to be themselves victorious. But while the fleet was still at sea, ominous notes appear in the Diary of Mr. Pepys mingled with the rumour of news from the ships and anxious surmises as to their fortune: 'The ships are near the Dutch coast, within the Texel: but there are great fears of sickness in the city, it being said that two or three houses are already shut up. God preserve us all!' he cries. Six weeks later he records with a thrill of alarm, which somehow reaches us at this distance through his words: 'This day, much against my will, I did in Drury Lane see two or three houses marked with a red cross upon the doors, and "Lord have mercy upon us," writ there, which was a sad sight.' . . . That terrible visitation of the plague, of which we have so many distinct yet closely resembling pictures in almost all the great cities of mediæval times had made its last great historical appearance in London. Among all the records known of such a calamity, Defoe's imaginary, but most real, *History of*

*the Plague*, is perhaps the most effective, but even in the slight references of Pepys, made in few words, yet impressive in their simplicity, the magnitude of the great national misfortune is very evident. Young Penn, whom his travels and the novelties with which he had been surrounded, and all the exciting circumstances of his beginning of life, had diverted from those deep religious impressions which had swayed his early youth, was profoundly moved by the terror and gloom around him. The air was full of tales of horror; a frolicsome young gallant riding with a party of his friends met, as he supposed, a fine lady carried by in her chair, and thrusting his head, with the licence of the time, within its curtains found himself face to face with a plague-stricken patient on her way to the hospital; Mr. Pepys's coachman fell ill upon the box of his master's coach. The closed houses with their red crosses, the terrible bill of mortality, rising daily higher and higher, the news whispered with bated breath of this one and that who had been struck down, were enough to move the strongest spirit. In the midst of it the admiral came home flushed with victory, with dreams of a peerage, and happy in the thought of the elegant young gallant, who was so well qualified as his heir to make a figure in the world. But he found a sad change come over the 'modish person,' the 'compleat young gentleman' whom he had parted with so short a time before. A 'deep sense of the vanity of this world and the irreligiousness of the religions in it' had again become the predominant thought in young William's mind. His prattle of society, and those French graces which had disgusted

Mr. Secretary Pepys were laid aside; the young man had gone back to all his Puritan ways. Had he been a gay profligate, one of those pretty fellows who astonished Mr. Pepys himself by their licence, yet amused him by their mirth, Sir William would not have found in that any great drawback to his son's advancement. But what could he do with a boy thus penetrated by the gravity, the tragedy of life?

It is difficult not to feel a little sympathy with the father notwithstanding the virtue of the son. The pang with which such a man sees himself balked in all his hopes for his boy is real enough and perhaps as keen, if less noble, than his who sees his higher ideal come to nothing in the more vulgar way. But the admiral was a man of many resources, and did not easily accept defeat. He had sent his son to France to have his head turned with gaiety and splendour on the first disclosure of his too serious tendencies; now he sent him to Ireland, to plunge him into work and responsibility, where there was a little court far more pure but not less gay than that of Whitehall, to persuade the youth back to the common ways of life. As a portion of the rewards that fell to his share for public services Sir William had an estate in Ireland, which required looking after, as Irish estates always do. And here he had the occasion ready to his hand. Penn was accordingly sent to Ireland, and once more the balance turned. He found himself among young men as highly trained and full of spirit as those he had left, but under the better control of that good Duke of Ormonde whose presence made a bright spot in the dark history of the time. Penn be-

came once more a courtier; he became, what was still more wonderful, a soldier—and distinguished himself in the quelling of a small insurrection, one of the accidents that were always occurring in that always troubled and uneasy country. Not only so, but pleased with his own powers, the future Quaker, the man of peace, made up his young mind to join the army, waited impatiently for his father's permission to do so, and was deeply disappointed when that permission was refused. Perhaps, with one of the amiable weaknesses of youth, he was pleased with his own appearance in the warlike uniform which in those days was more awe-inspiring, more sublime even than the scarlet—for it is curious to find that the only portrait existing of him was painted at this time, and in armour. The spectator now looking at the youthful figure in this garb of mail is prone to think of something symbolic, the emblematical apparel of a Christian warrior. But William Penn at twenty-one actually wore an iron breastplate, and liked his own looks in it, and had himself painted so for the admiration of all men. Over this hauberk, so strangely inappropriate, looks out upon us a young countenance, simple, gentle and ingenuous, with large mild eyes, and an air of sweetness and purity almost feminine: a face to make a mother glad, one of those which show in every line a mind constitutionally incapable of vice and inclined to goodness.

Such he was, when he made this innocent proclamation of a liking hitherto undeveloped for activity and real work, for war the most real of all things and the most serious, when it is not a mere matter of parades

and uniforms. Perhaps it was to please the mother at home, and sister Peg who was often so merry in Mr. Pepys's good company, that the picture was done. Anyhow it stands there a record of the still unconverted Penn as nature made him, looking out for his right way in life, and believing that he might find it in those risks and dangers which for once in a way had heated his young blood, and filled him with the fervour of action. Penn would not have been the first soldier, nay hero, who with a boy's face, which might have been taken for his sister's, had gone in his innocence to a quick death, and so got rid of all the problems. A Maid of Arc, but boy instead of girl—never meant to be vulgarised into a man of ordinary aims, but to be killed in his first battle in defence of everything that is most high and dear. Such was not at all Penn's fate, nor his character as declared in after years; but that is how he looks at twenty-one, at the last moment of his cheerful youth, before the influences which had already showed themselves had taken possession altogether of his heart and mind.

This was the moment when the fortunes of the family were at their highest, and all both within and without was going well. William Penn made a short visit to London in the midst of his Irish affairs, and showed himself to his father, once more a 'compleat young gentleman' in the way of every good fortune, having laid all his extravagances by. The admiral too was high both in fortune and in hope. Pepys, always with a grudge, comments upon the too great splendour with which he had prepared for the marriage of his daughter,

and the triumphant sailor might well suppose that now all things were going well with him, and that he had shaken himself free from the troubles of life.

Young Penn returned to Ireland to the duties of his office, perhaps a little elated too with all the good things that had fallen and were falling to his share. His business, however, took him frequently into Cork, and on one of his visits there, he heard of a preaching which was to be held that same night in the town. By what means the news could be spread about and reach the ears of a young gallant of the Court party it is difficult to imagine; for conventicles were illegal, and such a fine gentleman not likely to be in the secrets of the humble religionists. However Penn did hear of it, and the name of the preacher, who was no other than Thomas Fox, the poor Quaker who had stimulated him to his first rebellion in Oxford. For a peaceful and humble missionary, this man had already brought his young disciple into trouble enough. But Penn prints his name in the solemn importance of capitals, fine sonorous black letters, good enough for any person of distinction—so that it is evident Fox held a great place in his estimation. The text which this wandering evangelist took for his address was one that went straight to the heart of his self-convicted hearer: 'There is a faith that overcomes the world, and there is a faith that is overcome by the world.' Penn must have felt in the sudden rush of associations, in the remembrance of his past fervour and present backslidings, that his was of the latter kind—a faith overcome but too easily by the charms and temptations of external life. He listened

no doubt with a profound certainty that God Himself had sent this same preacher once more to confound and overwhelm him in the midst of his pleasures. He came back again and again to the little meeting, so private, almost secret, the assembly of the few who were bold enough to venture within reach of fine and prison for the sake of their faith. How long this went on we are not told, but early in September 1687 a company of soldiers burst into the little conventicle and carried off the entire company before the mayor, where they were indicted for riot and tumultous assembling. The astonishment of the Mayor of Cork when he saw before him, among all those humble people, the fine young cavalier in his laced coat, who was known to be one of the gallants of the court, may be imagined. 'The Mayor observing that his dress discovered not the Quaker, would have set him at liberty upon bond for his good behaviour: which he, refusing, was with about eighteen others committed to prison.'

Here, however, young Penn, we are sorry to say, soon repented of his valorous determination to share the sufferings of the conventicle. With that mixture in him, which always continued apparent, of the great man's son, the member of a ruling class, unaccustomed to anything but command, with the humility and submission of a sufferer for conscience sake, he changed his mind after the first flush of willing martyrdom. No doubt if it had been a question of going to the stake at once, Penn would have been ready; but a noisome prison, abominable as prisons were in those days, and all the indignities involved in detention there, were more

than he could bear. He wrote from his cell to Lord Orrery, the son of the Lord-Lieutenant, and one of his acquaintances, appealing with indignant grandeur to his sense of justice. 'The occasion may seem as strange as my cause is just,' he says. 'Religion, which is at once my crime and mine innocence, makes me a prisoner to a mayor's malice, but mine own freeman; for being in the assembly of the people called Quakers there came several constables backed by soldiers, rudely and arbitrarily requiring every man's appearance before the mayor, and amongst others violently haled me with them.' He then relates how he had argued the question with the mayor, and found his only authority to be an act of 1660 directed against 'Fifth Monarchy Killing Spirits,' and in no wise against such a conscious loyalist and good servant of the king as William Penn; and indignantly demands a 'speedy releasement.' 'It is,' he says in conclusion, 'a bad argument to invite English hither' in order to treat them in so unworthy a way.

This letter of course was immediately successful in procuring the release of Mr. Penn; whether it had the same good effect in the case of the others is not recorded. These small sufferers are altogether of little account in the story. Perhaps it would have been more consistent had the young gentleman shared their fortunes instead of freeing himself thus by personal favour; but he was still very young, very indignant, and ignominy was new to him. This brief imprisonment however settled the matter at once and for ever. There was to be no more begging of the question. He

was henceforward a Quaker, bound to the Quakers with every tie.

The consequences, as may be supposed, were not pleasant. He was jeered and jibed at. 'His companions' wonted compliments and caresses were changed into scoffs and derision. He was made a bye-word, scorn and contempt both to professors and profane; to the latter for being religious, and to the former for having a better rank than theirs.' The usual good-natured friend who delights in conveying disagreeable information, in this case 'a nobleman of his acquaintance,' wrote to the admiral telling him what had happened; and the young man was summoned home. Mr. Pepys on his side gives an account of this sad occurrence sympathetically, but not without an under-current of satisfaction in Sir William's discomfiture. 'She tells me,' he says, 'that Mr. William Penn who is lately come over from Ireland is a Quaker again or some such melancholy thing; that he cares for no company nor comes into any; which is a pleasant thing after his being abroad so long; and his father such a hypocritical rogue,' he adds with savage criticism, 'and at this time an atheist.' Poor Sir William had enough to bear without this secret attack which his enemy has sent down to echo through distant generations. All his expedients, all his precautions, were come to nothing. After so many slips he had reason to believe that his virtuous prodigal was landed at last on safe ground; and now in a moment, at the height of his hopes, all was over, and no expedient or resource left in which he could put any hope. The boy was no longer of an age

to be whipped and punished. What was to be done with him? The simple yet elaborate story has a certain pathos in its details.

'My pen is diffident of her abilities to describe that most pathetic and moving contest which was between his father and him; his father actuated by natural love, principally aiming at his son's temporal honour; he guided by a divine impulse having chiefly in view his own eternal welfare; his father grieved to see the well-accomplished son of his hopes, now ripe for worldly promotion, voluntarily turning his back upon it; he no less afflicted to think a compliance with his earthly father's pleasure was inconsistent with his obedience to his heavenly one; his father pressing his conformity to the customs and fashions of the time: he modestly craving leave to refrain from what would hurt his conscience; his father earnestly entreating him and almost on his knees beseeching him to yield to his desire; he of a loving and tender disposition in an extreme agony of spirit to behold his father's concern and trouble; his father threatening to disinherit him; he humbly submitting to his father's will therein; his father turning his back on him in anger; he lifting up his heart to God for strength to support him in the time of trial.'

We have here a formal yet graphic record of one of those conferences which are of continual recurrence in life, forming sometimes a turning-point to the young, always one of the most heart-breaking experiences to the old. The agitation and anxious reasoning of the father, his entreaties and arguments, falling at last into threats and fury, in hopeless conflict with the youth's pious obstinacy which was beyond both threats and flatteries, will find a parallel in many memories. Sir William might have been a better man, and young Penn a much worse one without changing the situation.

And in this case at least there is a sort of exasperated patience and desire to make the best of it in the behaviour of the father. Finding that he could do no better, he seems to have offered a complete condonation of all offences on the condition, which seems simple enough, that Penn would consent to uncover in the presence of the king, the duke, and himself. The hot-tempered sailor even waited with what patience he might until his son took time to consider this request, which, after much thought, he rejected. Then Sir William could bear no more. 'When all endeavours proved ineffectual to shake his constancy, and his father saw himself utterly disappointed of his hopes, he could no longer endure him in his sight but turned him out of doors the second time.' And thus all the poor admiral's expectations, his fond fancies and pride in his son, came to an end.

There is something tragi-comic in the cause of all this misery. 'The ceremony of the Hat' seems a poor reason enough to call forth so much feeling, and however we may respect the young man's piety and his determination not again to be drawn away from the paths of righteousness, yet this impassioned resistance to the commonest forms of courtesy is very confusing and indeed ludicrous to the spectator at this distance. The Quakers except at the very moment of their formation as a sect have always been very well treated by the world; they have been the objects of a good-humoured toleration in which perhaps a certain sense of amusement has had no small share. Their inner creed has been but little studied, while those highly

distinctive outward peculiarities, which now have almost fallen into oblivion, pleased the general mind by permitting a gentle ridicule such as tends to charity, ridicule much encouraged by the fact that in later times the Quaker simplicity of garb was but another word for the finest and costliest raiment that could be procured, the richest sober-coloured silk, the most delicate lawn, the finest broad-cloth, a modest splendour which cost more thought and care, as well as money, than the ordinary habiliments, the wearing of which was denounced by the sect as pomps and vanities of the world; but the placid, wealthy, highly-educated Friends with their guileless mock humility were very different from the restless and impassioned band whose principle it was to offer insult, or what was invariably taken as such, to all dignitaries both official and natural. It would require a deeper study of the peculiarities of the time than our space permits to show how many conflicting influences combined to make possible such a curious outburst of the eccentric in the accessories of pure religion, how the exasperating assumptions of divine right on one hand, and the justification and greatness of rebellion on the other, touched the hot temper and inspired the visionary imagination, so that it was a relief to the spirit to level every distinction, and instead of endeavouring to prove who had the best right to respect, to respect none, so far as external distinctions went, and refuse all outward sign of honour save to God alone. In this point of view the sentiment was fine; but when it was translated into practice, forbidding the son to take off his hat to his father or the

subject to his sovereign, it is almost impossible for those who have no temptation to be angry to treat it with perfect gravity, or to understand how such a curious punctilio could be worth the sacrifices it entailed. We are bound to add, however, that Penn paid few of these penalties. He was turned out of doors and exposed to the charity of his friends, having no other subsistence (except what his mother privately sent him); but he was the son of a rich and important personage, and his friends were many, and probably not too credulous of the father's lasting severity. As a matter of fact, almost invariable in such cases, the parental severity did not last. 'After a time,' we are told, 'his father's wrath became somewhat mollified, so that he wished for his return to and continuance in the family, and although he did not publicly seem to countenance him, yet when imprisoned for being at meetings, he would privately use his influence to get him released.' Thus 'the bitter mockings and scornings that fell upon me, the displeasure of my parents, the invectives and cruelty of the priests, the strangeness of my companions,' all of which sad things Penn related to the admiring community gathered round him at Wiewart in Holland some ten years after, were probably not so terrible as they seem.

The hat, however, and the eccentric outside of the new sect, though most prominent to the public eye, were, it need scarcely be said, a small part of its real meaning. And there was enough in the shameless vice and as shameless obsequiousness of the times to warrant any extravagance of revolt from it. To young Penn, brought up upon the edge of that corrupt court, and seeing behind

the scenes by what unscrupulous means every man struggled for his own advancement and the overthrow of his neighbour, there was indeed a double reason for the righteous scorn of formal teachings which had no connection with practice, and professions of respect which concealed nothing but loathing, hostility, or contempt. A young and candid soul, with no natural inclination to share in the abominations of fashionable life, must have recoiled from them with a warmth of impassioned horror which milder manifestations of iniquity do not call forth. And there was no longer either in his mind or life any echo or possibility of compromise. In 1668, immediately after these events, he became a fully authorised preacher and minister of his sect—an office which conveyed no sort of clerical separation, yet gave a certain authority to his missionary work—and from that time threw himself entirely into evangelical labours, both with tongue and pen—notably with the latter, his industry being almost as great in the production of religious treatises as is in these days the industry of the young novelist eager to build up a reputation. Mr. Pepys expresses but a poor opinion of his first production: 'A ridiculous, nonsensical book set out by William Penn for the Quakers; but so full of nothing but nonsense that I was ashamed to read in it'; but changes his mind when another, called *The Sandy Foundations Shaken*, and especially treating of the doctrine of the Trinity, fell into his hands. This the candid critic found 'so well writ as I think it is too good for him ever to have writ it; and it is a serious kind of book,' he adds, 'and not fit for everybody to

read.' This little work was very serious indeed to Penn, and laid him under the first real persecution to which he was subjected.

It sprang from a public debate got up with a Nonconformist called Vincent, from which, finding himself to have the worst of it, Penn's opponent is said to have retired summarily, in a dishonourable way, after having put a question as to the Quaker's belief in the doctrine of the Trinity. Unable by this flight to get full expression for his sentiments, Penn put them into print, and, with elaborate arguments as to the impossibility of three Persons forming one, assailed, and, to his own satisfaction, confuted the orthodox view. 'Which,' says the *Life*, 'gave great offence to some then at the Helm of the Church, who presently took the old method of reforming what they called error, by advancing at once their strongest argument, viz. an order for imprisoning him in the Tower of London.'

'There was he under close confinement, and even denied the visits of his friends; but yet his enemies attained not their purpose; for when after some time his servant brought him word that the Bishop of London was resolved he should either publickly recant or die a prisoner, he made this reply: "All is well: I wish they had told me so before, since the expectation of a release put a stop to some business. Thou mayest tell my father, who I know will ask thee, these words: that my prison shall be my grave before I will budge a jot; for I owe my conscience to no mortal man; I have no need to fear, God will make amends for all. They are mistaken in me; I value not their threats and resolutions; for they shall know I can weary out their malice and persistences; and in me shall they all behold a resolution above force; conscience above cruelty, and a baffle put to all their designs by the

spirit of patience, the companion of all the tribulated flock of the blessed Jesus, who is the author and finisher of the faith that overcomes the world, yea, death and hell too. Neither great nor good things were ever attained without loss and hardships. He that would reap and not labour must faint with the wind and perish with disappointments; but an hair of my head shall not fall without the providence of my Father who is over all."'

The reader of the present day might be disposed to think that the young gentleman did protest too much, and that his conscious superiority to everybody who disagreed with him is scarcely in accord with his tenets of universal brotherhood. But a young man who had so distinctly turned his back upon the world and its most flattering promises of advancement had some excuse, when he found himself shut up in the Tower and actually a martyr, for the use of strong language. He took to the prisoner's best consolation, the pen, as soon as he knew that he was likely to be kept there, and produced, among other works, the only one which has had anything like a permanent survival, the *No Cross, No Crown*, which is still occasionally read by other than enthusiastic historical students. He also produced a little treatise of self-defence, entitled *Innocency with Her Open Face*, to which, in the *Life*, his liberation is proudly attributed. 'In this Apology he so successfully vindicated himself that soon after the publication of it he was discharged from his imprisonment, which had been of about seven months' continuance.' The facts of the case, however, would seem to be, that his father, perhaps at first not displeased to have the young man feel what were the penalties of his breach with the world, came

after a while to the rescue, and as—though himself in very deep waters and threatened with impeachment—he still retained his favour with the king and Duke of York, he attained at last the release of his son. The court chaplain, Stillingfleet, was sent to talk with the recusant, and smooth over his heresy, and Penn was set free.

We need not follow him in his succeeding journey to Ireland, where, the admiral's confidence in his business powers not being lessened by his eccentricities in religion, he was sent to look after the Irish estate, and on his return was received fully into parental favour, and recognised as the staff of their old age by his parents. Sir William indeed never attained old age; but his life had been hard and full of risks, and he was a prematurely broken man. He died in 1669, at the age of forty-eight, making an edifying end, and adjuring his son to continuance in well-doing with a piety which is a little odd when we reflect how earnestly he had attempted to turn him away from it. 'Son William,' he is recorded to have said (with a late yet comprehensible conviction that after all William was in the right, which is more natural than his exhortations to 'Have a care of sin!'), 'if you and your friends keep to your plain way of preaching and your plain way of living, you will make an end of priests to the end of the world.'

Sir William was no prophet, nor were any such gifts to be expected from him; but no doubt it was profoundly consolatory to his son to receive this sanction of his conduct after so many troubles. 'The tenderness of my

father to me before and at his death, and how through patience and long-suffering all opposition was conquered,' is one of the points upon which he dwells in his after narrative to his Dutch friends.

It was, however, before his father's death that Penn had the triumphant encounter with the authorities, which gives us so curious a glimpse into the law courts of England at that period of lawlessness and disorder—the one time in English history in which the officers of justice have descended from their high estate. The Conventicle Act had just been renewed with a fresh and full authority, and there could be little doubt that the preaching in Gracechurch Street, in the act of which Penn was apprehended, was illegal; but the wrangle of the prisoners at the bar with the magistrates, Lord Mayor and Alderman, who probably were not very strong in points of law, and with the Recorder, who was no less a person than Jeffreys, afterwards so notorious; the yells of rage that proceed from the latter, the mutual taunts exchanged between the bench and the dock, are almost too wonderful to be credible. 'Take him away,' shrieks the Recorder when Penn, a most exasperating criminal, has made a point. 'My lord, if you take not some course with this pestilent fellow to stop his mouth, we shall not be able to do anything to-night. Pull that fellow down, pull him down!' 'I will cut his nose,' says the Mayor. 'Stop his mouth, jailor; bring fetters and stake him to the ground.' Nor is the conversation between the judge and jury less remarkable. The bench foams at the mouth when the jurors return again and again with their verdict, finding that Mr. Penn spoke in

Gracious Street, but refusing to add the words, 'in an unlawful assembly.' 'Sir, you are the cause of this disturbance, and an abettor of faction; I shall set a mark upon you. Sirrah, you are an impudent fellow, I will put a mark upon you,' the Recorder and Mayor in chorus say to the foreman. 'Gentlemen,' shouts the Recorder, 'you shall not be dismisst till we have a verdict that the court will accept . . . . I say you shall together and bring in another verdict, or you shall starve; and I will have you carted about the city as in Edward the Third's time.' Exasperated in their turn, the jury at length acquitted both prisoners, with a manly determination not to be bullied which does them credit, upon which the following scene ensued:

'*Recorder.* "I am sorry, gentlemen, you have followed your own judgments and opinions rather than the good and wholesome advice which was given you. God keep my life out of your hands; but for this the court fines you forty marks a man, and imprisonment till paid."

'At which Penn stept towards the bench and said:

'*Penn.* "I demand my liberty, being found by the jury."

'*Mayor.* "No, you are in for your fines."

'*Penn.* "Fines for what?"

'*Mayor.* "For contempt of court."

'*Penn.* "I ask if it be according to the fundamental laws of England that any Englishman should be fined or assessed but by the judgment of his peers or jury? since it expressly contradicts the fourteenth and twenty-ninth chapters of the Great Charter of England, which says: 'No freeman ought to be assessed but by the oath of good and lawful men of his vicinage.'"

'*Recorder.* "Take him away, take him away, put him out of court."'

LORD JEFFREYS AS CHIEF-JUSTICE

*From an engraving by R. White after Sir Godfrey Kneller*

The end of this extraordinary trial is that both the acquitted prisoners and the jury were committed to Newgate, Penn and his friend refusing to pay the fines. These were, however, privately paid for them, presumably by the admiral, then very near his death; and they were liberated. 'As to the poor jurymen,' says Clarkson in his Life of Penn, 'who had been fined at the same time, I can nowhere hear what became of them or how long they were allowed to languish in their prison.' They were the real heroes of the occasion, though their stand for their rights has hardly taken its due place in history. Let us hope they were men of substance to whom forty marks was not an overwhelming penalty.

The admiral, on his deathbed, feeling no doubt that his son's tendency to get into prison was a dangerous one, and that it might not be so easy to get out again when he himself was no longer at hand to make interest, commended William to the protection of the Duke of York, making him Penn's guardian, as some say; but that was scarcely possible at the age to which the young man had now attained. James was always kind to his old friend's son, whom he had known so long, and transferred to him the interest which he had always taken in his father. Neither of them, it is evident, could forget the cruise in the 'Royal Charles.' The link between them was purely personal—an old acquaintance, a traditionary and inherited friendship. It seems scarcely possible that such a link can exist between a royal personage and a subject without a certain amount of illusion, a pardonable glamour in the eyes of the lowlier friend, an inclination to see in the best light all that is done by the prince

who must surely mean well to everybody, being so wisely appreciative of one. It is right that this should be taken fully into account in the consideration of that connection with the court which has brought so much criticism upon Penn's career.

His father's death left him in possession of an income of about fifteen hundred a year—a much larger fortune in those days than now—but did not much change his position in other respects, as he had fully enfranchised himself from any parental control. For some years his history is but a record of incessant preachings, conflicts, imprisonments, the life of a fighting man in the exercise of very sharp weapons of offence, though he was a man of peace. We are constantly reminded of the bland reproof of a certain famous head of a college in Oxford to an undergraduate who had associated himself in youthful zeal with the so-called Salvation Army: 'I am glad to see that you take so great an interest in religious matters,' said this awful dignitary, 'but you know, Mr. So-and-So, it is contrary to politeness, as well as to University etiquette, to call the Vice-Chancellor a child of sin.' Penn was not moved by any such prejudices. When he found that his brothers were mobbed and ill-treated at Oxford, he assailed the Vice-Chancellor of the day in the frankest language. 'Poor mushroom, wilt thou war against the Lord?' he writes. 'Shall the multiplied oppressions which thou continuest to heap upon innocent English people for their peaceable religious meetings pass unregarded by the Eternal God?' Indeed the peace which Penn preached never showed in his words; no more exasperating defendant ever stood

at a bar. His legal knowledge, his fluent power of language, his cool head, not to speak of the charm of personal appearance, and of disinterested suffering in the cause of religion, which has always an effect upon the popular imagination—all united to drive to the borders of frenzy the hapless magistrates who had to do with him in the several prosecutions to which he was subject. Here is an example :

'*Sir J. Robinson.* "Do you yet refuse to swear?"

'*Penn.* "Yes, and that upon better grounds than those for which thou would'st have me swear."

'*Sir J. Robinson.* "I am sorry you should put me on this severity ; it is no pleasant work to me."

'*Penn.* "These are but words ; it is manifest that this is a *prepense malice.*"

'*Sir J. Robinson.* "I wish you wiser."

'*Penn.* "And I wish thee better."'

Not much wonder if they sent him to Newgate ; for the pestilent fellow was generally in the right, which gives a sting to everything. He was not less decided in his letters than in personal encounter. Here is a little example of his manner of speech to so respectable an antagonist as Richard Baxter, with whom he had desired a public argument on the peculiarities of the Quakers' creed, which Baxter seemed to him unwilling either to grant or openly deny. It is in reply to a letter of Baxter which Penn insinuates has been purposely delayed in the delivery :

'The beginning of this unhappy youth tells me : "If I have not yet enough"—of what? Railings, Slanders, Interruptions, dirty Reflections : Yes, too much had R. B. pleased. But of Reason, Good Language, Order, and Personal Civility,

little or none fell from R. B., I affirm. Well, but "my vain ostentation of my Forwardness to another meeting shall be no cover to my shame." I thought I had been shameless. There is Hope of me, I see. But, R. B., why ashamed? For thy senseless, headless, tailless talk? I profess I was more than ashamed, for I was grieved that my last kind letter had no better success. I perceive the Scurvy of the Mind is thy distemper. I fear it's incurable; I would say I had rather to be Socrates at the Day of Judgment than R. Baxter; but that he would tell me that I am nearer a-kin to Heathens than to Christians—and the Truth is for such merely nominal ones, I desire to be. Thus much at present from

'Thy friend, W. P.'

This is how religious controversy was conducted in the seventeenth century, for it is evident from the quotations from Baxter's letters, that they were couched in similar terms. The extraordinary fluency with which page upon page of pious vituperation is poured forth, and minute points of controversy argued, makes the reader stand aghast. There was a perpetual war of pamphlets, of treatises, of polemical replies, of letters public and private. Scores of forgotten publications rise in the dim air like gnats in a summer mist, when we penetrate among those shadows. What fiery certainty of faith, what ardour, what conviction, what boundless assurance of being right, what righteous wrath against the opponent's wrong! Who is there among us so sure of anything as Penn was of everything? or who dares suggest, as influencing the greatest criminal, motives which he attributes with colloquial freedom to the best of men?

We must not, however, linger upon the endless controversies which are buried in the two huge volumes

of his life and works, published shortly after his death. When we come to read them, the dry bones, the dry leaves rustle with inextinguishable echoes of a life more vehement than ours—the voices rise menacing, denouncing, with command, as it were, of the very thunderbolts of heaven. The smallest matters rise into importance, the minutest shade of difference showing like a hostile flag, the divergences of individual opinion becoming matters to stand for death and life upon. The hat, that venerable symbol, is no bad representative of the standards for which so many were ready to live and die—a thing of entire unimportance in itself, yet standing in their fervid imaginations and zealous souls for so much. Perhaps, when our own age comes to be looked on from the heights of the twenty-first century, there may be a similar impression of a Babel of contending tongues and opinions ; but the warmth will be far less, the actions fainter, the murmur and commotion much less persistent and sincere.

Penn made many missionary journeys during this period of his life, and preached and pleaded everywhere the cause of true religion, always fervent in that cause, if a little too warm in reprobation of everything with which he disagreed. Of one of these journeys, to Holland and Germany, he kept a journal, which though too entirely evangelical, and with more of the missionary than the man in it, yet sets forth the life of the wandering apostles with a few human touches which are grateful to us. He and his companions seem to have gone only to places where there existed already a nucleus of Friends, that name now beginning to be used among

them—or at least of devout persons to whom their special teaching was likely to be welcome. The chief among these was the Princess Palatine (as she is called), Elizabeth, the daughter of the Elector Palatine and Elizabeth Stewart the ill-fated King and Queen of Bohemia, and the sister of Prince Rupert, whose fiery character is so well known, and who had been the enemy of Sir William Penn. The princess, however, and her devout lady-in-waiting had probably little knowledge of English politics, and received Penn with that special regard which from the time of the apostles has been shown by honourable women to the bearers of a religious message. There are one or two pretty and touching pieces of narrative, as when Penn, always asking in apostolic fashion, what worthy people there may be in the place at which he arrives, finds himself in the little religious community constituted by a certain French preacher, de Labadie, in which there is much that is congenial to him, and where he tells to the interested circle that story of his conversion and persecutions from which we have repeatedly quoted; one of the principal members of this community was a certain Anna Maria Schurman, 'an ancient maid about sixty years of age, of great note and fame for learning in languages and philosophy, and hath obtained a considerable place among the most learned men of this age.' It is to the princess, however, that he returns again and again, finding much refreshment in her gracious sympathy. Here is one tender little scene:

'As soon as the meeting was over the princess came to me and took me by the hand (which she usually did to us all

coming and going) and went to speak to me of the sense she had of that power and presence of God which was amongst us, but was stopped, and turning herself to the window broke forth in an extraordinary passion, crying out *I cannot speak to you, my heart is full*: clapping her hands upon her breast.

She melted soon into a deep and calm tenderness, in which I was moved to minister a few words softly to her, and after some time of silence she recovered herself, and as I was taking leave of her she interrupted me thus: *Will ye not come hither again? Pray call here as ye return out of Germany.* I told her we were in the Hand of the Lord, and being His could not dispose of ourselves. But the Lord had taken care that we should not forget her and those with her. For He had raised and begotten an heavenly concernment in our souls for her and them: and we loved them all with that love wherewith God loved us: with much more to that purpose.

She then turned to the rest of the Friends and would have had us all go into supper with her. But we chose rather to be excused; we should eat a bit of her bread and drink a glass of her wine if she pleased in the chamber where we were. . . . So we left them in the love and peace of God, praying that they might be kept from the evil of this world.'

Wherever the missionaries passed they lighted upon devout companies of their own way of thinking, or at least with minds open to the truth, although in one instance Penn makes a mild complaint of one of the ladies who opened her house to him, that she was 'a woman certainly of great wit, high notions, and very ready utterance: so that it was hard for us to obtain a true silence, a state in which we could reach to her.' But even this difficulty was overcome, the too eloquent lips stilled, and 'a sweet time of refreshment' followed. In most places the universal fervour was so great that 'life ran as oil and swam atop of all.' On one occasion,

indeed, they were turned off his lands by an angry Graf whom they refused to salute when they met him, and who perhaps had a better reason for his anger, since they were on their way to a private meeting with the young countess his daughter, whose religious principles he objected to. Thus the Quaker apostles made their way, generally very well received, and always very sure that their way was the way of salvation.

On Penn's return to England he married Sulestura or Suli Springett, the daughter of one of Cromwell's officers, who had been brought up as a girl under the shadow of Milton in his country retirement at Chalfont in Bucks: about whom there is not very much to tell, though Mr. Hepworth Dixon in his life of Penn tells all and perhaps a little more. She was already a Quaker, and the match was suitable in every way, the bride being young, fair, and well endowed. The bridegroom was still but twenty-eight, notwithstanding all his experiences. His marriage made but little difference in his life—he still travelled and held meetings, sometimes accompanied by his wife, and still wrote and printed pamphlets and letters upon the religio-political conflicts which tore the country asunder. Great was the agitation of the time, in which every Nonconformist worshipped God on sufferance at the mercy of the nearest magistrate, who might disperse the meeting as an unlawful assembly and put the preacher in prison, and yet England swarmed with Nonconformists holding their meetings everywhere; when the indulgence which the king proclaimed was denied by the angry and alarmed Parliament, which saw in this apparent toleration only a way of freeing from

all restrictions the hated and dreaded Church of Rome, as well as that beginning of independent action on the part of the monarch which was the beginning of despotism; and when dissenters themselves refused the help held out to them for both these reasons, and preferred the Conventicle Act under which they suffered legally to the ease given to them despotically, and which Roman Catholics were to share; and the Test Act was passed which did all any act could to make life impossible to those who did not conform. Penn and his friends suffered almost more than any other sect, being the youngest and most zealous of any, and his life was one continued protest against not only persecution, but the principle of persecution, in his own and every other case. He was, to his honour be it said, almost the only man not a Roman Catholic in England who was steadily of opinion that even the Catholics had a right to worship God in their own way. To no other leader of religious opinion was this grace given; and the result of his impartiality was that he was called Papist and Jesuit, even by those who had reviled his Quakerism and laughed most at those eccentricities which were as deeply opposed to Romanism as night to day.

After a long interval of absence from the court, Penn presented himself there for the purpose of obtaining the release of George Fox. After some little difficulty he saw the Duke of York and speedily obtained what he sought. 'A great lord, a man of a noble mind,' he says in his letter announcing to Fox his liberation, 'did as good as put himself in a losing way to get thy liberty. He prevailed with the king for a pardon, but that we

rejected. Then he pressed for a more noble release that better answered both. He prevailed and got the king's hand to a release.' It would seem certain from other accounts that it was James himself who had taken this upon him. And thus after a considerable interval the links of ancient friendship were again drawn close by a benefit, between the Catholic prince and the Quaker courtier. It may not be amiss here to continue the history of this connection, leaving to another chapter the narrative of Penn's proceedings in America, to many the most interesting portion of his career. There he found himself in presence of a new world where everything was to make and set in order, without the embarrassment of existing society or conventional rules. Constitutions, laws, national customs and routine had all to be invented for the novel state. It was a romance of legislation, of formation, an ideal state, not of mere speculation like those of Plato, More, and Bacon, but real and in the hands of a man with very distinct views on the subject. But in the old world his feet were beset by thorns; his path led him through complications innumerable, and paradoxes almost more than human intelligence and virtue are able to carry a man safely through.

Penn left England for his American possessions in 1682. He returned in little more than a year and a half for various urgent reasons; his own boundaries were questioned by his neighbour, Lord Baltimore, who had gone home to plead his cause, and the Friends were in trouble and distress in England and stood in need of their powerful champion.

The moment of Penn's arrival was a very critical one. The death of Charles II. took place shortly after, and James, unpopular, feared, almost hated, came to the already tottering throne with every prognostic of evil that could attend a king. In the Quaker narrative, however, and in Penn's Life, this gloomy tyrant, this plotter against the constitution of England, he who was unseated from his throne with more unanimous consent and less resistance than ever king was—bears an aspect very different from that in which we commonly see him. It is difficult, especially in the record of a life which is to a certain extent an apology, to refrain from partisanship. If Penn did not believe James to be sincere in his proclamation of freedom of conscience, then it is very hard to believe in Penn's own sincerity and greatness of character, and the apologist would be compelled to allow that his hero considered something else than moral excellence necessary in a friend of such rank, and winked at many errors in a king which he would have denounced in an ordinary companion. The latter fact of course in any case is indisputable. There were, however, as has been seen, many reasons for Penn's personal attachment to James, an older man than himself, and one to whom he was not called upon to preach, but only to influence when he could, for the advantage of the faithful. No petition of his seems ever to have been refused by his royal friend. One of the first acts of the new king's reign was to remit the penalties imposed upon those who had refused to take the oath of allegiance, by which act twelve hundred Quakers at once were set free from prison. Until we are made aware

that this boon was of advantage to Roman Catholics and Quakers alone, the other Protestant sects having never objected to the oath, either as an oath or as a bond of allegiance, the act seems one of pure justice and specially honourable to the monarch as pardoning an offence against himself. The further proclamation of March 1687, proclaiming what in its formal aspect was really liberty of conscience, requires a full knowledge of all the conflicting circumstances of the time to reveal its hidden effects and drawbacks. As a matter of fact, it gave, though illegally, complete emancipation for the moment, and, although done in the interests of the most intolerant of creeds, the one with which persecution is a principle and duty, accorded absolute toleration. The Quaker apologists may be pardoned if they accept this without searching deeper; and it is quite credible that Penn believed it. He thought even that his own voluminous writings, especially a certain plea for moderation, had convinced the new king; and how sweet this thought must have been to a religious polemic it needs little insight to divine. Even before these public evidences that James was 'really principled for granting liberty of conscience,' Penn had been constantly successful in his personal applications for mercy. And with the flattering sense of power which is so apt to turn all heads, he had no doubt a most true and earnest desire to do what he could for suffering Friends, and even within limits for sufferers in general—and last (but, to do him justice, least), to promote a private cause of his own. It is very natural in these circumstances that the king's friend, intending his residence in England to be short, should have removed his family from the

country and established himself close at hand where he could show himself at Whitehall and be at hand when the king wanted him every day: though it is a curious detail in the jumble of his existence at the time. This had been his father's dearest wish for him, which in his hot-headed youth he had balked; and to carry it out now, without bating a jot of his own principles and pretensions, must have been sweet. And Penn had the gratification of feeling that his courtiership was entirely disinterested. He might have put 'twenty thousand pounds in his pocket and a hundred thousand in his province,' Macaulay quotes, disingenuously attributing this loss to bribes refused. But the true meaning of the words seems to be, that had he encouraged the panic felt at James's accession and augmented the general uneasiness by encouraging multitudes upon the wing, he might, as he himself said, have put many thousands of people into his province as well as pounds into his pocket. He took an opposite course: he proclaimed his belief in James's good intentions boldly, he carried all sorts of petitions to him and received many boons. He freed his own brethren from all penalties, he did good to all men (with exceptions) so far as it was in his power. He did not interfere, so far as we are told, on behalf of Richard Baxter, and though he did obtain a pardon for Locke, he does not seem, as in the case of George Fox, when Locke refused to accept a pardon, to have pushed his interest for 'a more noble release.' These were perhaps superfluities of kindness which even from a good man like Penn it might be too much to expect.

There are, however, shadows in the picture very much more dark than these. Macaulay represents Penn to us

as a man carried away by court favour, unable to see through the disguises and specious pretences under which James concealed his unrelenting determination to secure the triumph of his Church, and entirely unconcerned by the king's infringement of the constitution. The only plea that can be produced against these accusations is that Penn was deceived—with a completeness unworthy of his understanding. No doubt liberty of conscience was more dear to him than the constitution, and he hated the Test and Conventicle Acts more than he dreaded the exercise of the king's prerogative. But these, though errors in judgment, might have been pardonable errors. It is, however, beyond measure strange to see this rebel against all conventional rules, this preacher of boundless charity and toleration, taking his way from the galleries at Whitehall, or from the king's closet, whence he carried the assurance of a friend served or a boon granted, to the gibbet in Cheapside where Cornish was hanged opposite to his own windows, or the stake at Tyburn where Elizabeth Gaunt was burnt for Christian piety and hospitality. The Quaker with his mild eyes, lingering by Cornish's gibbet to the last, then hurrying in his coach across London to see the fire take light around the other victim, and breathe the smoke of human sacrifice, is a picture too wonderful, too revolting to find a place in the record of a good life. He did it, his apologists tell us, to be able to tell the king, who had refused his prayers in their behalf, how both these sufferers asserted their innocence to the last. But how such a man, after such a sight, could have returned to James at all, without flinging his allegiance in his face

and throwing off his service for ever, is a thing which it is very difficult to understand. It would have been better that a hundred Quakers had died in gaol than that their apostle should give the sanction even of an explanation to such scenes. It is curious also to note that no allusion to the Bloody Assize or the massacre of the unfortunate retainers of Monmouth is to be found in Penn's life. Macaulay's accusation against him as having had to do with the cruel proceedings in the case of the Maids of Taunton seems too vague to be worthy of belief, and quite unlike all that we know of Penn. But it is very extraordinary that he should have lived through all these horrors at James's elbow, yet never given audible evidence of his disapproval. This is a worse thing than any such definite offence.

'These events (the expeditions of Monmouth and Argyle) belong to the domain of general history,' says Mr. Hepworth Dixon. That is very true; and Penn's special subject was religious liberty. But after the sickening barbarity of reprisals, which no historian has been found to defend, how could the champion of the oppressed, the pleader for mercy, who, 'so far as can be known,' no doubt exercised his influence more or less on behalf of the sufferers (which is all that the hottest partisan can say)—how could the gentle Quaker, the man of peace, hold his place, and come and go, and believe and sanction the good intentions, the merciful meaning of the king? This is a great mystery, and one which it is not easy to solve. Had the prophet never any impulse to say, 'Thou art the man,' when he came smiling into the royal closet? Did no ghost flit across

his path, when so many were being violently severed from their house of flesh? Did he go and watch Alice Lyle in the fire as he watched Elizabeth Gaunt? and never find himself able to save one of them, yet accept all these dreadful scenes without an animadversion? A man so fond of lifting up his testimony, always ready to remonstrate; and yet he says not a word. This silence is more derogatory to Penn than anything that has been said against him.

We need not add, since there is nothing very certain to say, to the evidence concerning the case of the Fellows of Magdalen, in Oxford, for whom he interfered at a later period, with an almost ostentatious confidence in his power of setting all right. When King James, after introducing Roman Catholic heads in Christ Church and University, attempted to do the same at Magdalen, the Fellows, to frustrate his interference, hastily elected a head of their own choosing—Dr. Hough—and withstood the summary orders given them to annul his election. Penn (according to the story of Clarkson) rode to the college, had an interview with the threatened dons, and wrote a letter to the king on their behalf, which was to set all right. It did not succeed in doing so, however; and, after various other incidents, a deputation came to Windsor to represent their case once more to their advocate. The conversation reported between Penn and the Fellows is not agreeable to read. 'Majesty did not love to be thwarted,' he told the troubled scholars. And with a little bravado of his own principles of universal toleration, which to them in their actual circumstances could scarcely be called less

than insulting, he expressed his hope that they would not succeed in securing the two universities as invincible bulwarks for the Church of England, as if none but they were capable of giving their children a learned education. 'I suppose,' he continued with what seems the strangest levity, 'two or three colleges will content the Papists—Christ Church is a noble structure: University is a pleasant place: and Magdalen College is a comely building.' If this meant anything, it must have meant that the beautiful college for which his petitioners were pleading was already doomed, and that he thought their pertinacity in its defence something amusing. 'When I heard him talk at this rate I concluded he was either off his guard or had a mind to droll with us,' said Dr. Hough; and the conclusion he carried away, that 'the Papists were resolved to have our college,' will probably seem to the reader quite warranted. Penn does not come well out of this interview. His aspect does not seem to us that of a trafficker in simony, as Macaulay calls him, nor yet of a royal tool attempting to cajole or frighten his victims into compliance with his master's will, so much as that of one who had overshot his mark, who had represented himself as capable of good offices and services which really were not in his power, and who now could reply to the anxious men in peril with nothing but platitudes about himself and his good intentions, and the inexpediency of endeavouring to 'thwart majesty.' 'He gave us a historical account of his acquaintance with the king,' wrote Dr. Hough, who evidently had no admiration for his would-be benefactor, and entered into unnecessary explanations as to the foolish popular rumour that he was a

Papist, or even a Jesuit in disguise. The conclusion we draw from the tale is that Penn had been made to see the length of his tether, and that his officiousness in interfering on behalf of the Magdalen Fellows had produced some very clear intimation on the part of King James that though he might defend his Quakers as much as he pleased, he was not to meddle in the case of larger game.

Penn continued faithful to the king till the end. When all his courtiers forsook him, the Quaker still remained constant, and never gave up his belief in the sincerity of James's motives, or took any steps to make himself agreeable to his successors, by whom indeed he was arrested again and again for correspondence with James and supposed devotion to his interests. At the same time, he was never accused of conspiring in any way against the existing powers or plotting to bring back his friend and patron. He was not a politician save in so far as politics are connected with religious questions; but the steady and quiet friendship which he never disavowed shines fair in comparison with the almost universal treachery of the time.

The other side of his life, with its great enterprise, its kingship in a way, its conflicts too with recalcitrant parliaments, its fine ideal of primitive right and justice, affords in many respects a more agreeable theme.

# THE QUAKER

## II

IT was in the year 1676 that Penn was first drawn into his connection with the great continent beyond seas, which had already for fifty years been, as it were, the safety-valve of English society,—the harbour of refuge for the persecuted, the Utopia of the visionary. A great new world of boundless fertility and freedom, hampered by no heritage from the past, open to all the theories of the future, America was at this moment the great and real romance of the English race, as well as a shelter, nowhere else to be hoped for, for all to whom their own country had become impossible through the many troubles of that period of convulsion. The despair which had driven the Pilgrim Fathers forth to the untrodden wilderness was no longer the motive of the emigrants. Persecution, indeed, had scarcely slackened, and showed little appearance of ending, even the spasmodic intervals of indulgence having no foundation. But the first bands of exiles, the forefathers of the New World, had proved that the risk of emigration was worth running, and all the first dangers of colonisation had been overcome. Things were indeed just at the point which was specially delightful to a theorist, confident of having principles

and a system by which the perfect life both for a community and for individuals is to be obtained. The first colonists had demonstrated, not only the practicability of the experiment, but also the errors and mistakes into which men are at all times too likely to fall, and those of what we may call the second generation had warning as well as encouragement in their example. Penn's first essay in the work of colonisation was not in his own interest. The New World was at that time a most welcome resource to the prodigal court of England, by which the king paid debts and rewarded courtiers, and, still more desirable, procured for himself a little ready money as occasion served, while those to whom he granted the new-found provinces followed his example, and divided and subdivided the endless wastes, indifferent in most cases to any natural rights. In this way a Friend, Edward Byllinge or Billing by name, acquired from Lord Berkeley a portion of the state of New Jersey, but being apparently a somewhat thriftless Friend—a character not at all common—soon parted with a portion of it to another Quaker, John Fenwick, and afterwards was compelled to place it all in the hands of trustees for the satisfaction of his creditors. Penn, who though without any official rank was the chief man among the Quakers, became in the first place the arbitrator between Billing and Fenwick, settling by solid arguments, let us hope, and also by one or two letters in his usual imperative and authoritative style, a disagreement between them; and afterwards acting as principal trustee in the final arrangement.

Into this work he seems to have entered with the greatest vigour and goodwill. In all his independent state-

ments, his letters and published work, it is very apparent that Penn was disposed to take very high ground as a teacher; and though profoundly tolerant in principle, and with the unusually enlightened conviction—a conviction shared by very few even of those who knew the sharpness of religious persecution in their own persons—that Papists themselves ought not to be whipped for being Papists, was yet devoutly certain that his own way was the right way, and that other professions of Christianity were but little to be trusted to. It was natural that he should seize upon the opportunity of setting forth a model state, in which his own people should find the happiest refuge that yet had been established. The early emigrants had formed their constitution after they had reached their new habitation and overcome those early initiatory difficulties which go before politics, and some of them had showed little more of the faculty of learning by their own sufferings than kings are supposed to do. In New England, for instance, Quakers were by law prohibited from entering the sacred territory of the Nonconformist state, and, if found there, were subject to instant imprisonment, with almost greater severity than had been exercised in England. In these circumstances a special refuge for the Quakers was a matter of necessity; and the exercise of a magnanimity which conceived no possibility of reprisals was now in Penn's power. His very first step was to draw out an elaborate constitution for this new colony establishing its liberties, and especially the freedom of religious conviction, with every possible guarantee.

It must be added, however, that he was not the first to

carry the principle of toleration to America. Lord Baltimore, his future neighbour and opponent, though himself a Roman Catholic, had learned his lesson better than the pious dissenters of Massachusetts, and in his domain there was no question what was the religion of the colonists. Here the two extremes of religious belief seem to have changed places. The tolerant Catholic finds little praise from the historians. His motive is supposed to be the business-like one of drawing the best men to his colony; and perhaps the fierce old Independent is a more characteristic figure who with his last breath adjures his community:

> 'Let men of God in court and churches watch
> O'er such as do a toleration hatch,
> Lest that ill egg bring forth a cockatrice
> To poison all with heresy and vice.'

Toleration, however, was the first principle in Penn's constitution; no test or question of faith such as that which made membership of the Church essential to the rights of citizenship in Massachusetts was so much as admitted in the new state. The franchise was founded on the old English basis of property, each distinct territory returning a member to the Assembly, for whom every honest man under these conditions had a right to vote, and the Assembly in its turn electing ten commissioners who were to wield the executive power. The institution of the jury, which from the early days in which an honest jury had been sent to prison for acquitting him had been held in special honour by Penn, was elevated into judicial power, and some special laws for the protection of orphan children, and of the unfortunate generally, most beneficial and necessary in

an infant community, were added to the simple charter. This brief document was, as soon as completed, published, along with a description of the natural advantages of the new settlement, its climate and fertility and space, and circulated far and wide. America was no longer an unknown country, the last resource of men in despair. So many as twenty thousand Englishmen had got themselves established there before the fate of Charles I. had been accomplished ; and it was with none of the shiverings of the first pilgrims, setting out towards the unknown, but rather with the eagerness of men who saw before them an excellent chance of making their fortunes, that the new world beyond the seas was regarded.

When the letter of the Quaker managers and trustees was thus spread abroad, offers came from every part of the country for lots in the new colony. Two companies consisting of Friends were established at once for the purpose of sending out settlers, and to one of these a tenth part of the whole land was allotted. A curious anecdote is told of the setting out of the first ship, which carried the commissioners appointed by Penn and the other trustees to set the colony agoing, along with a considerable number of emigrants. While it lay in the Thames, just about to set sail, the king's barge passed by. King Charles saw the group upon the decks and the solemn bustle of departure, and with that good humour and friendliness which in a monarch covers a multitude of sins had himself rowed alongside, to ascertain where the travellers were going. When he was told their destination and intention he asked if they were all Quakers : then gave them 'his blessing,'

as all the historians tell us. Perhaps some royal joke at the groups of grave faces under the shadow of that Hat which Penn had made familiar, drew from the courtiers a titter, as this unusual benediction was bestowed. The emigrants did not uncover, but no doubt were as much pleased, being Englishmen and made of ordinary flesh and blood, by the episode as if they had been as obsequious as other men; and the ship went her way with a little excitement and gratification on board over this special farewell. The Quakers knew, perhaps, that they were, in some way or other, favourites of the king, that their sufferings were none of his doing, and that he had again and again exercised his prerogative in their favour—all which was no doubt owing to the fact that Penn had once been a youth about the Court, and that King Charles had kept up a kind recollection of his old admiral's son.

Very likely it was his employment in the affairs of New Jersey, and the success which attended his arrangements, which directed the mind of Penn towards the greater work with which his name is so entirely connected, and which is his chief title to recognition by posterity. The story of Pennsylvania has been often told, but is still probably better known on the American side of the Atlantic than to Englishmen. During the final settlement of his father's affairs, Penn discovered that the king owed to the admiral the large sum of £16,000, no trifle even now, but then a much greater matter. Payment from Charles was never very hopeful, but here was this vast pocketful of land, this big continent, from which all embarrassing claims might be satisfied. Penn had been going deeply into the sub-

ject,' and had acquired a certain knowledge of the geographical features of the unallotted states. He must have known roughly that though less attractive than the other portions of territory which had been already occupied, there were many advantages and much natural wealth waiting discovery in the as yet virgin soil to which his attention was directed. To secure it, however, was not altogether an easy process. Parting with value of any kind was disagreeable to a court so entirely out at elbows, and the personal interests of the Duke of York, hitherto Penn's unfailing patron, were in some degree involved—not to say that there had been a certain coolness between the prince and his protégé in consequence of the strong steps taken by Penn to free New Jersey from the tribute demanded by James as suzerain, the entire territory having been in the first place granted to him as lord. The proceedings on account of this and other hindrances were somewhat lengthy, but the result at last satisfied all Penn's hopes. He got the land he asked for—the huge province now known by his name—and after some further delays an additional grant from James of a property called the Territories, but now forming the state of Delaware. The grant was in extent almost equal to a European kingdom, and probably now both in population and wealth Pennsylvania might take a favourable place among the smaller countries of the Old World. But at that time it possessed nothing save the undisclosed riches underground, the forests in which the scanty tribes of the native Indians hunted and squatted, and a few insignificant settlements of Dutch and Swedish colonists, of whom nobody took any notice—certainly

not the authorities in the far-away imperious island to which America seemed the most natural of possessions.

The tradition which attaches to the choice of a name for this new possession makes a pretty story enough, and as it is given by all the historians, there seems no reason to doubt its truth. The first settlers do not seem to have exercised their imaginations to any great purpose in respect to the nomenclature of the new continent. Virginia was an apt and graceful compliment to the maiden monarch who took so much pains to call the notice of the world to her celibacy; but it is very curious to find the names of Charlestown and Jamestown given to their settlements by the loyal rebels whom Charles and James drove out of their native country. These awkward combinations of royal names, and the more reasonable and tender fancy of transferring the names of their homes in England to their new homes in America, seem to have been all the new settlers were equal to. But Penn's province was christened in a more splendid way by the great Cabal itself in council assembled. It is said that he wished to call it New Wales, but that the secretary of the council, who was a Welshman, objected, though it seems strange to tell why. Some one then suggested Sylvania, on account of the forests with which it was covered; and this title was received with general favour. Upon which the king himself, 'who never said a foolish thing,' and whose humour lent him a charm to his own generation, despite of all his evil ways—a charm which has scarcely yet died altogether from his memory—added 'Penn,' with half a grateful recollection of his old admiral and half a good-humoured laugh at the courtier

sectary who still stood with his hat on in the king's presence, yet perhaps by that very piece of obstinacy tickled the good-humoured monarch. A less authentic tale describes Charles himself on this occasion as taking off his hat, on the ground that it was the custom of the place that only one man at a time should be covered. One of Penn's biographers insists on the objections which the modesty of his hero raised to the name. He tried, it is said, to bribe the Welsh secretary into the resubstitution of the other title, but was unsuccessful; and even had recourse to the king, who perhaps might have been less incorruptible, but who would not give up his joke. And certainly the combination was more felicitous than any other of the invented titles given to the other new settlements. If an English critic may venture to say as much, the absence of a happy knack in this direction, which characterised the early colonists, is one undesirable feature in the inheritance they have left to their descendants. West Fifty-sixth Street is perhaps rather worse than the Jamestowns and Charlestowns which contrast so unfavourably with the flowing melodious syllables of the native names; so that there seems reason to believe that the defect has been inherited.

Here, however, Penn found himself at once converted into a sort of little king, autocrat, and legislator. He who had all his life fought against every title and sign of dignity was now Penn of Pennsylvania; King Charles of England had not a more characteristic title. He was but thirty-seven, in the prime of manhood. He had what was equal to a clan behind him, bound to him by many services, and by what is still stronger, the bond of

mutual faith—to many of whom he was not only a liberator from prisons and penalties past, but the deliverer from the land of bondage, the leader under whom they were to find new homes, mild laws, and an atmosphere of peace and security. To a man neither old enough nor unfortunate enough to have lost his ideal, what a position in which to stand! His previous life, in spite of its occasional persecutions and imprisonments—afflictions which gave a very fair equivalent in mental satisfaction and the glory which is dear even to the best of men—had not been anything less than a happy and prosperous life. But now had come his crown of existence. He stood upon that edge of fulfilment which is to most men the highest good ever reached on earth. He was the happy warrior preparing to shape his future life upon the plan which pleased his childish thought; a man of peace who was about to have it in his power to ensure peace on earth, at least in his own chartered and safe possessions; a man of fervent faith about to mould all things that most concern human life in accordance with his belief.

It is impossible to imagine a more perfect moment than that in which he sat down in his pleasant house in the country which was the resort of all who were of his way of thinking, full of hospitality, full of Friends and children and enthusiastic sympathisers, to form for his new kingdom a constitution which should be as free from stain as the soil upon which it was to be established. Nothing that is accomplished ever gives the unalloyed delight which is in such an anticipation. With reality all the complications of human individu-

ality and the contradictions of circumstances come in; but at that dazzling moment all was without check, without fear, a perfect ideal and hope. The saddest of all modern poets, the Italian Leopardi, proclaims in lovely verse the blessedness of the evening before the village holiday, when all is anticipation and delight. Penn was now at the eve of the festa, with such power of realising all his good hopes and good intentions as comes to few men in this life.

The biographers of Penn are eager to defend him from any imputation of seeking profit for himself in the matter; and without doubt, if pecuniary profit is what is meant, neither now nor at any other period of his life does he show much thought of that. But there is not the least evidence that Penn was unsusceptible to the glory of the position or to the pleasure of being himself the means of doing a great work and teaching a great lesson. He desired the possession of the 'New Land,' as he tells a friend, that he might so use it as a man not unworthy of God's love, and striving to further His kind providence and serve His truth and people: 'that an example may be set to the nations . . .' 'for there is room there, though not here, for such an holy experiment.' Throughout all the liberal meaning and enlightened statesmanship of his beginning, there runs the solemn yet simple strain of self-complacency which belongs to the man, and which rises into a sort of lyrical outburst in the first exaltation of fulfilment before trouble came. His 'holy experiment,' his 'example to the nations,' inspires him to a declaration of his own worth and works, which is so genuine in its great yet

simple assumption that, though prematurely, we may quote it here. It was written from Pennsylvania, in 1682, to one of those many good-natured friends who are always ready to present a mean view of the conduct and motives even of a man who feels himself an emissary from heaven.

'I could speak largely of God's dealings with me in getting this thing; what an inward exercise, of faith and patience it cost me in passing. The travail was mine as well as the debt and cost, through the envy of many, both professors, false friends and profane. My God has given it me in the face of the world, and it is to hold it in true judgment as a reward of my sufferings: and that is seen here, whatever some despisers may say or think: the place God hath given me, and I never felt judgment for the power I kept, but trouble for what I parted with. It is more than a worldly title or patent that hath clothed me in this place. Keep thy place; I am in mine, and have served the God of the whole earth since I have been in it; nor am I sitting down in a greatness that I have desired. I am, day and night, spending my life, my time, my money, and am not sixpence enriched by this greatness—costs in getting, settling, transportation, and maintenance now in a public manner at my own charge duly considered: to say nothing of my hazard and the distance I am at from a considerable estate, and, which is more, my dear wife and poor children.

'Well, the Lord is a God of righteous judgment. Had I sought greatness I had stayed at home, where the difference between what I am here, and was offered and could have been there in power and wealth, is as wide as the places are. No, I came for the Lord's sake, and therefore have I stood to this day, well and diligent and successful. Blessed be His power.'

This is, however, an anticipation. Penn withdrew with his charter from the king, as soon as he had secured it,

to his house in Sussex, and there began the delightful work of making a constitution for his new dominions. It was drawn upon the same lines as his earlier sketch of a constitution for the state of New Jersey to which we have referred; but with many additional details. Mr. Hepworth Dixon has done his best to prove that Penn was largely aided in this by a personage of very different calibre and meaning—the austere and reserved patriot, Algernon Sidney, who had but recently returned from exile. It is difficult to imagine two such men working together in the intimacy and harmony suggested; or to believe the statement that Penn, always a favourite at court, and at this special moment the object of the king's bounty, could have been recognised as one of the heads, with Sidney, of the republican party, which is what his biographer claims. The political history of the time, however, is full of confusion, and the changes and travesties endless. Penn would seem to have done his best to procure Sidney's election on both the occasions when he attempted to obtain a seat in Parliament; but the only warrant for attributing the constitution of Pennsylvania to Sidney is a letter in which Penn very warmly complains of some animadversions that he had made on this subject, saying that the laws which Penn had formed were 'not to be endured or lived under, and that the Turk was not more absolute than I.' This is but poor proof of co-operation on the part of so unlikely a pair.

Penn's constitution indeed seems to have been as democratic as heart could desire. If Sidney really made the jeering remark that 'the Turk was not more

absolute than I,' it was no doubt because his keen perceptions had noted the almost absurdity of the position of a hereditary governor who was at the same time proprietor of the province, at the head of an assembly elected by universal suffrage, with full power to alter and modify, yet always under the veto, or with the consent, of this governor, a species of benevolent tyrant, an unremovable hereditary head, with more powers than (now at least) belong to any constitutional monarch—this singular post being held by the chief member of a sect which acknowledged no dignitary and in which the most complete equality was the rule. The governor, however, with his three votes, and his privilege of taking, along with his council, the initiative in all measures, was the only incongruous element. Universal suffrage, the ballot, a system of continual re-election, calculated to keep the blood in circulation in the political body, were the foundations of the new economy. Of the two legislative chambers, the council, which was the smallest and most dignified, was at the same time the most important, all measures originating in it, while the larger Assembly could only accept or reject and had no initiative power, thus resembling rather the Consiglio Maggiore of the Italian states than the Commons of England.

The machinery altogether, in short, had a greater resemblance to that of Venice than of England, as is invariably the case in a freshly-manufactured constitution, where logic and theory take the place of natural development. Its broad basis and popular form are to be attributed not only to the character of the prevailing religious

opinion of the Quaker colony in which every Friend stood on the same level, but perhaps to a natural recoil from the extraordinary mediæval system which had been put forth by Locke and Shaftesbury some time before for the state of Carolina. How strange would have been the difference in modern life had America approved and set up the oligarchical scheme of the philosopher, with its hereditary earls and barons, under whom the lesser proprietors were to be bound to the soil with a more than feudal subjection to their suzerains, and where the lines of demarcation between class and class were to be fixed and unchangeable 'to all generations'—a severity which never has held under the most despotic régime! On Penn's side all except himself were on the basis of equality, everything was representative. Even cases in law were to be decided by juries instead of judges, the officers of justice being rather advisers than directors of the popular tribunal and appointed for short periods only—a system always considered incompatible with the higher interests of law in England, though adopted in many other communities. The governor was the only member of this hierarchy who was unchangeable. But the privileges he retained for himself were not great. He retained the right of taking the initiative in every new measure, but only in conjunction with the council. He had the privilege of nominating half of the judges and justices: and he had three votes in the superior chamber. But no ordinance of his was of any value unless it had the approbation of the assembly: and his power was thus practically controlled. 'For the matters of liberty and privilege,' he says in one of his letters,

'I propose that which is extraordinary, and leave myself and my successors no power of doing mischief, that the will of one man may not hinder the good of a whole country.' These are noble words, and Penn deserves to have the full credit of them. They were very novel in the ears of Europe: and though perhaps they went a little beyond the fact which, for the moment, had he so minded, might have left him considerable powers of mischief, they were perfectly true to his intention. He had very soon occasion to prove their sincerity, and the magnanimity with which he addressed himself to the work he had taken in hand, as well as the failure of that magnanimity when the circumstances were more strained than flesh and blood could bear.

These loftier pre-occupations did not prevent or forestall the business-like proceedings formerly resorted to in the case of the New Jersey settlement. As soon as he had finally secured the grant, he presently published an account of the province of Pennsylvania, with the king's patent and other papers relating thereto, describing the country and its produce, and proposing 'an early purchase of lands, and good terms of settlement for such as might incline to transport themselves.' This appeal was immediately responded to. His name and his position among the Quakers indicated from the beginning the class of colonists to which he looked; and the Friends, though they are said to have cooled much in their approval of Penn in view of his connection with King James, yet flocked like doves to take advantage of this new kingdom in which their harmless peculiarities should not only do them no damage but be considered as the rule of the perfect life, and their

admirable gifts should have full reward. Before 'the first adventurers and freeholders of that Province' set sail, their governor made them subscribe to the draft of the constitution, the first article of which secured full religious freedom to 'every person who useth not this Christian liberty to licentiousness or the distraction of others, that is to say, to speak loosely and profanely or contemptuously of God, Christ, the Holy Scriptures and religion, or commit any moral evil or injury against others in their conversation.' This, perhaps, is not exactly the toleration which we understand nowadays, nor was its further development more liberal. A clause was added indeed, to the effect that none 'should be compelled at any time to frequent or maintain any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever.' But on the other hand all the officials of the state, and even the electors (under the law of universal suffrage), were to be men of professed faith in Jesus Christ. Toleration meant only the freedom of all kinds of worship, not the liberty to throw off all bonds of belief altogether. This was as far as charity had yet learned to go. Much less was it concerned for those whose profane teachings might tend to the 'destruction of others.' The unbeliever, especially if he were a teacher of unbelief, was no more encouraged or protected in Penn's state than in other communities.

Penn's circulars met with even greater success for Pennsylvania than for New Jersey. His land was offered on very favourable terms, with the burden of a shilling of quitrent for every hundred acres, and was taken up readily, not only by private persons, but in one case by a trading company of Bristol Quakers, and in

another by a similar company from Germany. Three shiploads of colonists, after having signed the draft of the constitution and given their adhesion to it, set sail in 1681. They were accompanied by Penn's agent and cousin, Colonel Markham, who was not a Quaker, but a trusted and confidential friend of the governor, an able and honest man. This first band made so good a beginning that when Penn himself followed them in about a year, they had not only provided for their own immediate shelter and sustenance, but had already built many houses, and among others had almost finished 'a fair mansion house,' to be called Pennsburg, as a residence for the governor.

This new flight of population into the wilds had some unique features. They carried no arms or means of defence, and set out with the determination of trusting to nothing but justice and fair dealing for their protection against the aborigines and all other possible enemies. The Indians, whom the colonists of the 'Mayflower' had conciliated anxiously, had since that time met with worse treatment, and had greatly harassed and troubled the young communities with continual reprisals—bad faith and cruelty on one side producing treachery and murder on the other, with an ever-growing exasperation and mutual hatred. Penn did not, as everybody seems disposed to think, introduce an entire novelty in colonial principles when he made justice and kindness to the native population a part of his code; but he was wise enough to see after the experiences of the past that this justice must not be left to the good-feeling of the individual settlers, but must be enforced by law, and

defended by the same penalties which keep men in ordinary societies at peace with each other. Feeling is a doubtful guide where property and acquisition are concerned, and the first flush of honourable regard towards the simple natives of the soil had been proved to be a very evanescent sentiment. Both principle and feeling combined in Penn's circumstances to make this part of the question important. He was himself a man of a mild and just disposition to whom harshness was odious (except in controversy), and his community had abjured the ordinary means of defending itself. To make their position secure, it was absolutely essential that the Indians should be made friends and not, as had so often happened, enemies to the newcomers. His conduct and the fidelity with which he kept his engagements, and the care he took to have them fulfilled by others, are much to his credit; but he was not the first to conceive the idea of keeping faith and dealing justly with these wild inhabitants, neither were his proceedings entirely disinterested. We are apt to think of them as dictated by pure benevolence; they were in reality not only the best but the sole policy in his circumstances. When it so happens (as it may very well happen) that what is done out of a good heart and because it is right, is the best policy, the result is all the more happy that it was not consciously the object of the effort. And we may allow to Penn the full credit of a determination to do justice to the Indians and treat them as brethren, whatever the consequences might have been. But he is one of the fortunate men who manage to do a right thing in such a way as to secure the attention and admiration

of the world, a success by no means universal or even general, and, we may add, scarcely ever accorded except to those whose estimate of themselves is a high one, and who are fervently of opinion that no one has ever seen before them what was the right thing to do. Penn was of this conviction in many other matters besides his treatment of the Indians. He thought that he and his brotherhood were custodians of the truth *par excellence*, and that the greater part of the world, especially 'Priests and Professors,' lay in darkness. And when he wrote the letter to the Indians, which Colonel Markham and his band were charged to deliver, he announced himself to them at once as a contrast and exception to all the other colonists they knew. 'I am very sensible,' he said, 'of the unkindness and injustice which have been too much exercised towards you by the people of these parts of the world, who have sought to make great advantages by you rather than to be examples of goodness and patience unto you. But I am not such a man.' This letter laid the foundations of the peace between the Quaker community which wore no swords and the wild and wandering population to which the tomahawk was the most familiar tool. But the very fact that a letter could be sent, and that civilised methods of communication were practicable, shows of itself how much the position had improved from that of those early pilgrims, whose sole means of conciliating the tribes of which they knew so little was by means of a chance savage who had picked up a few words of English, and whose absence left them entirely helpless in front of an uncomprehended race.

Within a year of the starting of the first colonists, Penn himself, as has been said, went to visit his kingdom. It may be doubted whether he ever intended to take up his residence permanently there, for he left his wife and children behind him, to whom, such a voyage being a very serious matter, a solemn adventure, from which he might never return, he left letters of guidance, and directions during his absence, which were very judicious and tender, if now and then somewhat amusing in their details. Nothing can be more charming than the way in which he addresses his wife: 'Remember thou wast the love of my youth and the joy of my life: the most beloved as well as the most worthy of all my earthly comforts; and the reason of that love was more thy inward than thy outward excellencies, which yet were many; God knows, and thou knowest, I can say it was a match of Providence's making, and God's image in us both was the first thing and the most amiable and engaging ornament in our eyes. Now I am to leave thee, and that without knowing whether I shall ever see thee more in this world, take my counsel into thy bosom and let it dwell with thee in my stead while thou livest.' From the directions that follow it may perhaps be gleaned that Madam Penn had a few feminine failings. Her husband exhorts her to be regular in hours, with certain fixed rules, so that her times for work, for walking, for meals, 'may be certain, at least as near as may be.' 'And grieve not thyself with careless servants,' he says. He requests her also to 'guard against encroaching friendships: keep them at arm's end . . . and let thy children, good meetings, and friends be the pleasure

of thy life.' Had she an amiable weakness in the way of society, and not too much discrimination therein? Nay, was it possible that the lighter graces of the world sometimes led her imagination astray from the drab-coloured routine of the community? 'I need not bid thee be humble, for thou art so: nor meek and patient, for 'tis much of thy natural disposition,' he adds tenderly. She is to bring up her children liberally; sparing no cost on their education, though on other accounts he bids her 'live low and sparingly till my debts are paid.' In education he recommends 'the useful part of mathematics in building houses or ships, measuring, surveying, dialling, navigation.' 'But agriculture is especially in my eye: let my children be husbandmen and housewives: it is industrious, healthy, honest, and of good example.' The children he exhorts to the fear of God, to live sober and moderate lives, to obey their mother, and when they themselves marry, to bring up their children in the same virtues. 'Read my *No Cross, no Crown.* There is instruction,' he says with simple certainty.

'And as for you,' he adds, 'who are likely to be concerned in the government of Pennsylvania and my parts of East Jersey, especially the first, I do charge you before the Lord God and his holy angels, that you be lowly, diligent, and tender, fearing God, loving the people, and hating covetousness. Let justice have its impartial course and the law free passage. Though to your loss, protect no man against it: for you are not above the law, but the law above you. Live therefore the lives yourselves you would have the people live, and then you have the right and boldness to punish the

transgressor. Keep upon the square, for God sees you: therefore do your duty and be sure you see with your own eyes and hear with your own ears. Entertain no lurchers, cherish no informers for gain or revenge; use no tricks, fly to no devices to support or win injustice: but let your hearts be upright before the Lord, trusting in Him above the contrivances of men.'

All these precautions against the perils of the enterprise were taken before he left England to survey and set in order his new territory, in September 1682. 'After a prosperous voyage of six weeks they came within sight of the American coast,' says his earliest biographer, 'from whence the air at twelve leagues distance smelt as sweet as a new-blown garden.' When the ship appeared in the Delaware River with the governor on board, making its way up between the pleasant banks, the inhabitants, as many as there were, came out from every cluster of houses to meet and welcome him 'with demonstrations of joy and satisfaction.' The fertile country, the brilliant autumn woods, the scent of the sweet earth which had blown so far out to sea, the grateful sense of reaching land and home after a long voyage, combined with the cheers and joyful tumult, to elate the new comers. All was happiness, prosperity, and hope. Everything had gone well with the first band of colonists; the previous settlers had received them with open arms; the Indians had listened with wonder and satisfaction to the letter which the chief of the whites had sent before him; and now his grateful office was to confirm and approve and perfect what had been done in his name.

Shortly after Penn's landing an assembly was called for the purpose of ratifying the constitution ; somewhat prematurely, as it turned out. It sat for three days only, and for this purpose alone, and its members evidently dispersed with their minds full of the code which they had thus summarily adopted, but upon which they deliberated at leisure after they had returned to their house-building and their fields, with already a little tide of opposition to the gentle, god-like Chief creeping up in their spirits. One of the next of Penn's public duties was the meeting with the Indians which he had promised, and the ratification of the treaty with them which had been made by Colonel Markham. The winter was over and it was in the genial season when this celebrated meeting took place. He had already ingratiated himself with the tribes, trusting himself in their society, witnessing their games, even, it is said, sharing in these, and exhibiting his own agility among the braves, to the delight of the Indians, if somewhat to the scandal of the graver brethren. He met the chiefs and their followers in a clearing among the woods, the precise locality of which is not now to be identified in the suburbs of Philadelphia, but which was then on the edge of the primeval forests which had given the state its name. 'On his arrival he found the Sachems and their tribes assembling They were seen in the woods as far as the eye could reach and looked frightful both on account of their number and their arms.' The governor and his retinue were unarmed, and comparatively few in number, though they must have been within easy reach of the mass of the colonists, in case of any alarm.

Clarkson records the fact that Penn's only mark of dignity as governor was a sky-blue sash round his waist; and a profane reader might figure to himself the appearance of the great man as not unlike that of M. le Maire in a French village, dressed in his scarf of office, especially as Penn was no longer the slim, half-angelic youth of his early portraits, but a portly personage inclining to the comely plumpness of middle age.

There is a suggestion of the purchase of lands at this meeting which is too vague to dwell upon; but presents at least were exchanged, and the treaty, engrossed on parchment, was delivered to the principal chief after various speeches. There are so few romantic scenes in the modern history of the western world that a great deal has been made of this, of which West painted a bad picture, and which a eulogist so unlikely as Voltaire went out of his way to applaud. But oddly enough, it is not even mentioned in the plain record of the acts of Penn, which forms his first and most authentic biography. The writer of this life gives Penn's original letter to the Indians, in which, so far from acknowledging them as the proprietors of their soil, he informs them, that 'the king of the country wherein I live has given me this great province.' But no further reference is made to the matter and no mention of the famous assembly. There are, however, other records of bargains made with the Indians, and land bought from them, which open a rather difficult question. One feels disposed to ask which, in such a case, is the more honest way of dealing: to act upon the good old rule that 'he should take who has the power'; or to go through the form of

purchasing from the ignorant for a handful of rubbish the land of which they do not know the value? The Sachems in their savage gravity and simplicity, according to the record of one transaction, sold as much land 'as a man could ride over in two days' for a heterogeneous collection of articles, knives, tomahawks, blankets, kettles, looking-glasses, down to 'a hundred Jew's harps and a hundred strings of beads.' Of the two dishonesties we cannot but think that the first way is the least objectionable; and that such a semblance of a bargain as the latter was more likely to rouse indignation and resentment in the minds of the red men, when—if ever—they knew better, than the simple assumption of conquest and superior power in which no delusion was involved.

Something more remarkable but much less remarked took place when Penn met the first parliament of his state elected according to his own institutions. They began by electing a smaller number of representatives than had been settled by the laws, and speedily showed, though with all outward deference and respect, that they were not satisfied with the charter of their liberties. One cannot but feel that this must have been a painful shock to the magnanimous governor in high tide of conscious greatness, believing that he had done everything for them that enlightened liberality could do. But he was neither arbitrary in action nor did he—a greater wonder—show any signs of wounded feeling. He had informed them at once that they were at liberty to 'amend, alter, or add, for the public good,' and on seeing the signs of dissatisfaction asked them 'whether

they chose to have the old or a new charter.' The assembly unanimously requested a new one with such amendments as had been already agreed upon. To this Penn gave his consent, making them a speech in which he warned them to exercise their powers as a serious duty, and adding an assurance of his 'willingness to oblige' them, and a hope that their differences might be found reconcilable. So far as appears, no very great difference was made; the number of the representatives to be elected was lessened, along with other alterations not of primary importance; and certain taxes upon the future imports and exports were suggested in order to form a revenue for the governor; but this Penn rejected. The other additions to the constitution were wholly domestic. Arbitrators were appointed according to Quaker usage to prevent as far as possible all recourse to courts of law; and Penn's benevolent stipulations in respect to orphans were formulated into a court of protection and oversight. It is not, however, of very much consequence what these changes were. The fact that Penn permitted without complaint his work which had occupied him so long to be put aside, and something which, even though preserving most of his views, was not his, to be substituted, is more honourable to him, and a far greater effort than the much vaunted and picturesque incidents of his intercourse with the savages. The natural *bonhomie* of his character, and the pleasure of generous and friendly communication with an attractive and unsophisticated race, as well as the obvious policy of making friends rather than enemies of the armed and ubiquitous tribes who might have tormented

the peaceful community beyond endurance, fully account, both on the worldly and unworldly side, for his action in respect to the Indians. But that he should have given up his cherished plans, should have allowed sacrilegious hands to touch his sacred constitution, and sacrificed several of the features of his ideal state, the darling of his imagination, was indeed worthy of everlasting remembrance. Penn proved himself of the noblest mettle by this act of self-abnegation.

In the meantime he had a very busy and in many ways triumphant life. 'The country was unexceptionable,' says the early historian. 'The air exceeding clear, sweet and healthy, and provisions, both meat and drink, good and plentiful.' Penn planned the city of brotherly love with great zeal and zest, intending that it should, with its gardens and shady avenues and public squares, occupy a very large area. 'Thou, Philadelphia, the virgin settlement of this province, named before thou wert born,' he says apostrophising the new creation. In the intervals of his many occupations, he paid visits to New York: in one instance as a mark of respect to his patron the duke; in another to Lord Baltimore in Maryland, where there were troubles brewing about the mutual boundaries; but all was old-fashioned courtesy and politeness in the actual meeting, Maryland convoying Pennsylvania upon his way with every demonstration of kindness. Penn also surveyed and visited his own province, making notes of all its characteristics with an elation and enthusiasm which runs over in his letters. 'Oh, how sweet is the quiet of these parts,' he cries, 'freed from the anxious and

troublesome solicitations, worries, and perplexities of woful Europe.' And on another occasion: 'With the help of God and such noble friends I will show a province in seven years equal to her neighbours of forty years planting,' he declares. Notwithstanding the self-will of the assembly, it was still the ideal state to Penn. 'Of all the places I have seen in the world I remember not one better seated,' he says of Philadelphia; and nothing can exceed his content with all the natural features of the country. 'Thus he proceeded to settle his government and province and to establish a good correspondence with his neighbours,' says his early biographer.

The cause of his return to England in the midst of all these manifold occupations has been differently stated. The first historian treats it as a matter of course, 'Having settled all things in a prosperous and thriving condition,' that he should go back to England, where his home and family and many interests were. Subsequent writers, however, have found with more or less reason, specific motives for this step, which to them seems an interruption, unintended, of his career. His object was, some say, to settle the boundaries about which Lord Baltimore's agents were making trouble in London, while some are of opinion that the persecutions by which the Quakers were once more specially suffering, and in which he was almost their only hope, compelled his hasty return. Probably both these motives told with him, though of the former we hear very little afterwards; but we can scarcely doubt that he had always intended a speedy return, none of his affairs in England being wound up, nor anything done that pointed to a final

and permanent expatriation. He returned home accordingly, after a stay of two years in Pennsylvania, and resumed, though under curious circumstances, the thread of his life. These circumstances we have already remarked upon. He came back to find Charles dying, and James on the point of ascending the throne. And during the reign of the most unpopular king England has ever had, Penn, the virtuous, the magnanimous, the law-abiding, he who had conciliated the Indians, who had yielded his own pet scheme to the wish of his colonists, who had loved mercy and peace all his life, was suddenly turned into a court favourite, the confidant and companion of a prince with whom divine right was a religion and intolerance piety. To believe, as we do, and as we think all unbiassed spectators must do, that Penn continued an honest man through all, and that his position is to be accounted for by motives which, if not so elevated as in other parts of his career, were yet fully justified to himself, and capable of explanation to posterity, is to state one of those paradoxes which are peculiar to human life and action, but altogether contrary to theory, and to the consistency which is required by an absolute ideal. Penn was influenced no doubt by motives less than noble. He was flattered by court favour, a curious intoxication which the strongest heads seem unable to resist. His self-complacency, always an evident feature in his character, and his benevolence, were pleased by the power of doing good, which he evidently possessed to some degree, and believed in to a much greater. He had an affectionate regard for James, and believed that he did good to him

also as well as to the persecuted Quakers and others, whom he was able to deliver from persecution. His love to be busy, his kind officiousness and satisfaction in feeling himself a source of universal benefit, united in retaining him in this equivocal position. Sometimes there is no greater snare than the desire to do good to everybody. Penn was carried away by it. He never failed in his duty to his own people, and there is no evidence that he derived any advantage, except that of gratified pride, from his friendship with the king. But still the position was very equivocal, and it would have been better for his general reputation, and for the respect we bear him, had he never left Pennsylvania, or had he known no more of James than any other Quaker of his time. We must add, however, that it would have been much worse for the Quakers had this been the case, and perhaps for others to whom Penn stood a friend.

As strange as any other circumstance in this period of his life is the summary way in which his connection with James seems to have come to an end. While almost every other important personage of the time owned the confusion and bewilderment of the transition, by a series of treacheries sickening to contemplate, and yet partially explaining themselves by the giddy poise of sentiment and interest between the old and the new, Penn seems to have held the balance even by an entire withdrawal from the excitements of public life, neither seeking to recommend himself to William nor to help James; far less to do both, as was the fashion among his contemporaries. If this was simple high

principle on his part, the refusal on one side to help to re-establish a power which the country had rejected, or on the other to seek favour with the supplanter of his patron, he got no credit for such exalted feeling; but was compelled to pay the penalties and run the risks of a conspirator without having done anything to warrant suspicion. Again and again he was arrested and brought before the authorities; at one time before William himself, on the charge of conspiring in favour of, or holding correspondence with James, no one of all the plotters and traitors of the age being able to conceive of neutrality in such circumstances. Nothing, however, could ever be proved against him except that he had received a letter from his former patron. When charged with this, Penn made the obvious reply that he could not prevent James from writing to him, and confounded his accusers by admitting that no doubt it was aid in compassing his restoration that James expected from him. But evidently the expectation was quite unfounded. This sudden conclusion of a friendship so warm and so unlikely is as remarkable as anything about it. There exists, on Penn's part at least, no sign of further intercourse. He suffered for his friendship, but he did not continue it. His connection with the patron of his early manhood, the indulgent friend who had never refused to listen to his intercessions, might, so far as we are informed, have been severed from the day when James left England and his throne.

The history of Pennsylvania during this period of agitation at home was an unhappy one. From the moment of Penn's departure those oppositions which

had already broken out against him increased and strengthened. It would be hopeless to enter here into the chaos of political struggles in the new community, or to inquire what reason the colonists had for their opposition to the governor. So much had been given as to make that which was withheld an intolerable deprivation; and it might have been foreseen from the beginning that a governor who had the power, which Penn presently exercised, of turning everything upside down, was entirely incompatible with a representative legislation supposed to be formed for the purpose of making the laws and controlling in every way the management of the province. And how Penn's own mind may have been affected by the influences to which he was subjected in the court of James, and the manner in which his royal master and friend (with, as he believed, the best of motives) conducted his imperial business, it is difficult to tell. These must, however, one cannot but think, have told upon him, and along with the disrespect and unfaithfulness of his Pennsylvania subjects moved him to arbitrary measures which seem a direct contradiction to his boast of having left to himself and his successors 'no power of doing mischief.' However this may be, the fact is certain that Penn suddenly changed his tactics altogether, and in a moment by the exercise of his own will changed the government of his province, setting up five officials of his own appointment in place of the elective council which had opposed him, and giving these new representatives, not of the people, but himself, authority to 'declare my abrogation of all that has been done in my absence.' This sudden

change takes away the spectator's breath. No absolute monarch could have been more arbitrary. He dismissed the assembly by the same decree, as Charles and James had so often dissolved parliament with the hope of finding more complacence in the next. This was done in 1686 at the height of his court life and favour; and it is almost impossible to believe that William Penn in the quiet of Worminghurst, with no councillors but the honest good citizens and pious Friends who were his natural companions, would have taken such a step. Thus it will be seen that the mild Quaker could be as despotic as any king when he saw occasion for it, and that Sidney's saying (if he did say it), that Penn was as absolute as the Turk, was not without discrimination.

The change, however, does not seem to have had much effect; parliaments are not easily managed anywhere, and in a new country least of all. Penn made a second alteration in his executive, placing the power in the hands of three persons only, his deputy governor and two councillors; but still with no improvement in the state of affairs. And things in Pennsylvania were still going from bad to worse when the Revolution changed everything in a moment in England, and brought all Penn's pretensions to the ground along with those of so many others. What his feelings were on this occasion we have no information. He neither fled with James nor lamented him, nor conspired for him, as we have said. And he was always able to meet with calm and defeat the proceedings against him. But at last a moment came when it seemed expedient that he should show himself no longer in Whitehall or the other

public places where he was so well known. The immediate reason of the withdrawal is not made very clear. It was after an accusation made against him by a certain Fuller, who was proved so soon to be a liar and impostor that the impeachment could not be very serious. He thought it, however, advisable to 'retire for a time' and 'appeared but little in public for two or three years.' This is all that is said. He lived retired like a guilty man, in hiding, though innocent. It is painful to follow him to this low and dejected state in which one blow seems to follow another, and he was gradually deprived of everything—honour, credit, work and friends. Means had failed him among other things. His preaching and ministerial labours had to be sacrificed to the necessity of concealment, he was separated from his sick wife, his active outdoor life suspended, his energies all restrained. Even 'Friends' turned against him in this period of calamity. How had he offended them, unless perhaps by those assiduities at court which were in their interest, we are not told, but there is in existence the draft of a letter, very much resembling a confession, 'a tender reconciling epistle to all Friends,' which a certain Thomas Jones, son-in-law of George Fox, had drawn out for Penn's adoption, with a view to his reconciliation with the offended sect, for which he had done far more than any man living. Quakers, with all their excellencies, were not, apparently, any more than other human communities, exempt from the temptation of kicking a man when he is down. The climax of Penn's misfortunes came when, his difficulties in Pennsylvania being known, and the Quaker colony having refused to

take any part in the struggle with France which had begun, and was being carried on as hotly in America as elsewhere, King William took the government of his province out of Penn's hands and deprived him of all authority in Pennsylvania. This was a crushing and apparently unexpected blow. Penn's first impulse was to escape, to rush to his ungrateful people, now passed under the iron yoke of a military governor and forced to contribute to the war-expenses, if not to bear arms; but they refused him even the loan for which he asked to enable him to go. His fortunes had thus reached the lowest ebb in every way.

Yet the spirit of the man was not crushed. In his retirement he took to the only instrument that remained to him, and wrote, as of old, treatise after treatise with courage and energy unbroken. Alone, almost friendless, everybody standing aloof from him, in the hiding-place which was not much better than a prison, his faithful wife lying ill in the country, his loneliness interrupted only by now and then a stealthy and cautious visitor, the dauntless Quaker, as steadfast, as patient, as wordy as ever, composed among other works, a little book entitled *Fruits of Solitude*, in the preface of which it was still in him to write as follows:

'The Enchiridion, reader, I now present thee with is the fruit of solitude, a school few care to learn in though none instructs us better. Some parts of it are the results of serious reflection, others the flashing of lurid intervals written for private satisfaction and now published as a help to human conduct.

'The author blesses God for his retirement and kisses that gentle Hand which led him into it: for though it should

prove barren to the world, it can never do so to him. He has now had some time he could call his own, a property he was never so much master of before, in which he has taken a view of himself and the world and observed wherein he has hit or missed the mark: what might have been done, what mended and what avoided in human conduct: together with omissions and excesses of others as well societies and governments as private families and persons. And he himself thinks, were he to live his life over again, he could not only with God's grace serve Him, but his neighbour and himself better than he hath done, and have seven years of his time to spare. And yet, perhaps, he hath not been the worst or idlest man in the world, nor is he the oldest. And this is the rather said that it might quicken the reader to lose none of the time that is yet thine.'

Thus always ready to point a moral though at his own expense, always improving the occasion, ever disposed to believe that there must be something by which the world may learn in the experiences of such a man as he, Penn consoled himself in the depth of his darkest distress. There is something in his indomitable spirit, patience, and cheerful complacency, which in such a moment of downfall is almost sublime. He further tackled a still more difficult question in 'An Essay towards the Present and Future Peace of Europe,' which at the opening of an interminable war, and in days so little harmonious with his views, is a very remarkable production. No Peace Society, so far as we are aware, has yet ventured on suggesting such a system of provision for all occasions of quarrel as that which he puts forth in the boldness of innocence. It was thus that he whiled away the heavy days.

At last there came the moment which, if an injured

man has the courage and strength to wait for it, arrives for almost every martyr. It seems to have suddenly occurred to a number of spectators, noble and otherwise, that Penn had done nothing to deserve such a fate and that it was preposterous as well as cruel to persecute such a man. Two or three noblemen fired by this idea went in a body to King William. There was nothing, they said boldly, against the man, but what had been said by false witnesses, and such accusations could never be proved. They themselves, all statesmen deeply engaged in the history of the past period, had known Penn, some of them for thirty years. 'And they had never known him to do an ill thing.' King William probably was suddenly struck by the same idea, for such movements are contagious. He had not a word to say against their statement, but answered with confusion that William Penn was his old acquaintance too, that there was nothing against him, nor any reason why he should not move about as freely as ever. It is not often that a great mistake is so evident or so frankly acknowledged, nor indeed are there many mistakes in public life so little justified as this had been when they came to think of it. The imperial authorities for once in a way were ashamed of themselves. They must have felt their proceedings ridiculous as well as without cause.

Thus the darkness dispersed and Penn walked out into the daylight a free man. But he went from his seclusion to the bedside of his wife who died not more than a month after his release. She had been a tender and faithful wife to him, and not only so but, according to the formal yet touching account of her last days which he published afterwards, 'an active and constant

Friend of more than common capacity, of great modesty and humility, yet most equal and undaunted in courage.' She said on her deathbed, with a confidence unlike the self-accusations of so many other excellent persons, 'I never did in my knowledge a wicked thing in my life.' Penn lamented her no doubt with much sincerity; but with an ease not uncommon in such circumstances found, little more than a year after, a devout and comely maiden called Hannah Callowhill in Bristol who consoled him for her loss. His eldest son, Springett, so called after his mother's family, died shortly after the second marriage, a youth of twenty-one, full of that saintly piety which those who die early so often manifest. He had two children left: a son, William, who was of a very different mind, a clever, gay and much beloved prodigal who gave his father much grief and trouble, and a daughter, Letitia. His new wife, however, brought him several children, a sort of postscriptal family, in his old age.

And now that he had arrived at this stage, there happened to him as to Job a complete change in his life. As one trouble had accumulated upon another going from bad to worse, so, when the brighter impulse had been given, everything went up again almost as continuously for a time. He resumed his labours with great success, the Bishop of one place to which he went in the course of his missionary journeys complaining that he had been left to preach to the bare walls in his cathedral while everybody went to hear the Quaker. In other places, not only the general crowd, but dignitaries of the Church attended his services. Probably he regained command at the same time of his Irish estates, which in the confusion of the times had

brought in nothing or next to nothing. And some time later he managed so fully to justify himself before Queen Mary during her regency that he was fully restored to his supreme rights in Pennsylvania, and all again went well.

In the year 1699, six years after his liberation and new beginning of life, he paid his second visit to Pennsylvania with his wife, young children, and daughter Letitia. There the old system of affairs had been in some manner restored, with this great difference: that the assembly had secured for itself, during the temporary reign of the authorities appointed by William, and still retained, the right of the initiative in law making, and now stood in the place of the English House of Commons, instead of that of the Florentine Parliaments or Venetian Consiglio Maggiore. Penn had the wisdom to accept this alteration. He was received with many demonstrations of joy, and settled down for a little while into something of his old life, occupying the 'fair Mansion House' at Pennsburg, travelling about the country, preaching, resuming his old intercourse with the Indians, and pondering upon all that was best for the colony. His troubles with the assembly, however, continued with little intermission: he succeeded in putting down piracy and smuggling, in which his people had offended; but when he began to urge upon them the proper care and instruction of the negroes, whom he found to have been introduced in large numbers during his absence, the legislature would neither listen to his advice nor make his proposals into law. Penn had formed no opinions at that time on the general subject of slavery. To him

it meant the subjection under mild paternal law of a race without knowledge or training, it meant conversion and instruction in Christianity. He neither asked for freedom to the negroes nor political rights. He asked that their morals should be cared for and regulated by the same code, especially in respect to marriage, as those of Christian men, and that means of instruction should be open to them. The assembly began the long conflict between light and darkness on this question by refusing to adopt Penn's suggestion. The governor thus felt, with all the bitterness of a good purpose defeated, that the real power had passed from his hands.

During the whole time that he remained in Pennsylvania the conflict went on between him and the assembly. They made yet another new charter, establishing themselves in the rights of which they had got possession; and notwithstanding their experience of a sway less gentle than that of their founder, it is evident that they took every means of vexing and harassing him in the changed circumstances. Among other things they attempted to regulate the further sale of his lands at a fixed and arbitrary rate, and to appropriate a large portion of it as common land. Perhaps he was not sorry to have a peremptory call back to England, where a scheme was being considered to do away with proprietary provinces altogether, and to join them all in one under the Crown. To oppose this was the cause of his return; but probably in his disappointment with the state of affairs it was a relief to have such an excuse, and his family were unfeignedly glad. He returned to England in the end of 1701, having once more spent two years with

little satisfaction in the province which had cost him so much. He never went back. Before he left Philadelphia amid the quarrels and squabbles of the different factions, he had signed a third charter. He expresses no disappointment at these untoward circumstances in the history of his holy experiment; yet it is impossible not to feel that he must have turned his back upon the land of so many hopes with a heavy heart.

He sent his son William to the colony some time after, for the sake of the young man himself as well as of the state. Young William had shown himself to be not without ability, and the father hoped that in a new place and among surroundings so different, that change which a parent hopes for so long as hope is possible might come. Penn's letters on this subject are most pathetic. He implores the good man to whose special care he consigns his son to exercise the minutest and most impossible oversight over him. 'Weigh down his levities,' writes the anxious father. 'Watch him, outwit him honestly for his good. Fishings, little journeys to see the Indians, etc., will divert him. . . . Pennsylvania has cost me dearer in my poor child than all other considerations. The Lord pity and spare in His great mercy! I yet hope. O Pennsylvania!' he cries in another letter, 'what hast thou not cost me? About £30,000 more than I ever got: two hazardous and fatiguing voyages: my straits and slavery here: and my child's soul almost.' Probably in the midst of his bitter anxiety he reproached himself that his province and his cares had kept him from watching sufficiently over the beginnings of evil. But the father's prayers and hopes

were in vain. Young Penn used his liberty for his own destruction and filled Philadelphia with the sound of his riot and dissipations, covering with shame the name which deserved from the colonists at least nothing but respect and honour. Such experiences are more bitter than any worldly losses.

Penn returned to England with much trouble of all kinds to bear. The proposed annexation and confiscation of the provinces was not carried out, but he had the alarm and the preparations for defence to add to his other difficulties. He seems now to have been almost in the position of a poor man, with many debts on his head, 'hardly to be answered,' he says, 'from the difficulty of getting in what I have a right to—twice its value: which is like starving in the midst of bread.' . . . 'I never was so reduced,' he says on another occasion, 'for Ireland, my old peaceful possession, has hardly any money.' Thus two of his resources were cut off. Pennsylvania gave him nothing, and misfortune thus suddenly overwhelmed him in the weakness of his declining years. He had been carrying on a dangerous, long-continued, never settled account with his steward Ford, who, like Glossin in *Guy Mannering* and many another petty villain in romance, had by pretence of continual advances and false reckonings swallowed up his employer's estate and absorbed every profit into his own. When this man died, his widow and son brought forward an astounding claim for £14,000, to the consternation of Penn, who was totally unaware of any such debt. It was afterwards settled by a compromise, but in the meantime the governor of Pennsylvania, the friend of

princes, who had begun life as a rich man, and was the nominal owner of a province overflowing with wealth, had to remove from his house to the confines of the Fleet Prison, amid all the filth and misery of that degraded quarter, in order to escape worse indignities still. He had commodious rooms, it is said; but that such a man should have been thus humiliated in his old age is a pitiful lesson upon the vicissitudes of life. He was obliged to mortgage the province in order to obtain money to satisfy Ford's claim. The Quakers, now beginning to be, as they have always been since, a wealthy body, lent him on this security the money, £6,000, of which he stood in need. One would have thought they might have served so far without any security a man who had done so much for them; but there is a limit to religious brotherhood which alas! but seldom vanquishes the percentages of civilised life. The reader who may perhaps have seen in Mr. Besant's story, *The Chaplain of the Fleet*, a graphic picture of that lawless place in the eighteenth century, may form some idea of what Penn's feelings must have been when forced to live among such sounds and sights.

Just before this reverse of fortune he had been enjoying some degree of that royal favour which had once been so pleasant to him. Queen Anne came to the throne soon after his return from America. She had known him as her father's friend and must have seen him constantly at Whitehall in former days. There were no longer any urgent suits to be carried to court, any imprisoned Quakers to be pleaded for; but the old courtly haunts must have been grateful to the exile who

had gone through so many agitations since he was driven from them. 'Being in the queen's favour,' his historian says, 'he was often at court; and for his conveniency took lodgings at Kensington.' If he did this, as seems to be implied, to be near her, the queen's favour must have been great. We have no further details, however, except that Anne was favourable to him in all the further questions that came into discussion. Thus he ended his public life as he had begun it, in enjoyment of that fickle brightness which so seldom ripens any substantial fruit, but which, having once enjoyed and lost it, the wisest of men feels himself diminished and disappointed without. It is pleasant to think that it shone on Penn and warmed and lighted up the end of his career. How it was that he, a man who refused to acknowledge any earthly precedence or greatness, and who made his family miserable, and to all appearance ruined his own prospects rather than take off his hat, the slightest and easiest of civilities, so much as to the king and his own father, should have made his way so successfully into the favour of kings is a problem which we need not attempt to solve. Perhaps the little show of Quaker resistance to the flatteries and servility of that atmosphere tickled royalty, and was a grateful and piquant change from the obsequiousness of the common courtier—especially as the plain man's real sentiments were not so rebellious to courtly precedent as his manners and speech.

After Penn was liberated from his unwholesome residence 'within the rules of the Fleet' he went further out of London than even the 'lodging at Knightsbridge

over against Hyde Park Corner,' which had been his former dwelling, and sought a semi-country life in Brentford; but finding after a while 'the air near London no longer agreeable to his declining constitution, took a handsomer seat at Rushwood near Twyford, in Buckinghamshire,' where he ended his life. We may believe that his affairs must have been more comfortably settled before he was able to make this move, though his wife complains of their 'shrunk income.' Events, however, become few as the busy day draws to a close. He travelled and preached as long as he was able, and struggled almost to the last against that contradiction of sinners in the colony which had brought so much trouble into his life. A great deal of bargaining went on between Penn and the government about the sale of Pennsylvania, which he was greatly tempted to resign for a compensation in money; but he would not do so unless he could secure to his colonists the undisturbed enjoyment of the privileges of the constitution, which though they had altered it so often was not with his will to be taken from them. These negotiations failed, the government refusing to accord so much unwonted liberty. It was on this failure, or while the negotiations were still going on, that Penn wrote his last letter to his people. It is a letter full of dignity, of sad acknowledgment of his failure among them, and a serious, almost solemn, exhortation to consider what they were about. At last the heart of the ungrateful colony was touched. The old man's remonstrance produced so great an effect, that at the election of the next assembly, only representatives who were of Penn's party were chosen, and for

the first time the legislature of his province was in full accord with the governor. But like so many things in this life, the change came too late. Penn had been stricken with paralysis in the act of writing privately to one of the colonists, before he could hear of that happy alteration, and he never seems to have recovered his mental powers sufficiently to understand what had taken place.

He was a long time dying, like so many whose life has been full of work and agitation. His half life was a gentle twilight through which gleams of consciousness still came. He was able to talk of the events of his past existence, though he did not remember the names of his anxious friends, and would shuffle about the spacious rooms at Rushwood, and sometimes utter 'very sound and savoury expressions' or even speak 'several sensible sentences when he was taken to Reading to the meeting of the Friends.' But this is but a sad and broken reflection of existence, though it does not seem to have been painful to him. He died in 1718 at the age of seventy-four, after five years of this gradual and gentle decay.

So ended a life full of exertion, often noble, always friendly, good-natured and helpful to other men. If we can scarcely see at this distance the splendours of apostleship which many have found in it, it is at least a career which no one can follow without respect and interest. If his life and actions in England were sometimes a little questionable, for his colony he was perfect, serving it with devotion and patience unfailing, giving both in hope and in failure the best of all he had and was to its service, growing wise and noble for its sake,

and shaking from him on its behoof all littlenesses and asperities. He founded it in freedom and peace, and till the last moment of his conscious life he never intermitted his efforts to preserve it in the same. He died upholding its liberties, and protesting with his last breath against that accursed thing which has wrought America so much harm, which had crept into Pennsylvania, but which the Quaker parliament, moved at last by his words and example, were the first to discountenance and put down. Slavery had come in so insidiously, with so much the air of a possible advantage to the heathen races thus brought into a Christian land, that Penn himself had been deceived at first. But he saw more clearly before his death and left his enlightened views as a heritage to his people. For all this, America, and especially his own province, has good reason to regard William Penn as one of her purest heroes.

At home there was a great deal more of him to criticise; and though his defenders have wiped off some of the particular accusations made against him, there yet remains a great incongruity in his life which the most hot apologist can scarcely ignore. Perhaps an explanation of much that is equivocal in it may be found in that unfriendly description given by Bishop Burnet. 'He had such an opinion of his faculty of persuading that he thought none could stand before it, though he was singular in this opinion.' A hostile eye sometimes sees the characteristic weakness which is veiled to more charitable regards; and there is a truth in this which those who have read Penn's numberless addresses will recog-

nise. He thought that his 'faculty of persuading' might save King James, as it certainly did save multitudes of his fellow-believers with King James. He thought he had but to speak (for one instance) and the fellows of Magdalen would be delivered. He thought again that he had but to represent to them the circumstances, and that he should persuade them to submission. In both cases he failed, but in both cases an amiable complacency was his chief fault, a conviction that 'none could stand before' the voice of the charmer in his own person. That he had this faculty of persuading, though not to the extent he believed, is evident enough in his life. He won over his father, a jovial and irascible sailor, he won the gloomy and cruel James, he prevailed with the simple-minded Indians so that he was to them as an angel from heaven. He had good reason to have faith in this particular in his own powers; but such powers have always a limit beyond which they cannot pass; and there is nothing so difficult as to convince a man who has succeeded often when he arrives against the blank wall of human unpersuadableness at the last.

# THE DEAN

THERE are few figures in history, and still fewer in literature, which have occupied so great a place in the world's attention, or who retain so strong a hold upon its interest as that of Jonathan Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's. It is considerably more than a century since he died, old and mad and miserable, a man who had never been satisfied with life or felt his fate equal to his deserts, who disowned and hated (even when he served it) the country of his birth, and with fierce and bitter passion denounced human nature itself, and left a sting in almost every individual whom he loved: a man whose preferment and honour were far from the centre of public affairs, and who had no hereditary claim on the attention of England. Yet when the English reader, or he who in the furthest corner of the New World has the same right to the literature of his native language as we have, reads the title at the head of this page, neither the one nor the other will have any difficulty in distinguishing among all the ecclesiastical dignitaries of the age of which we treat, who it is that stands conspicuous as the Dean. Not he of royal Westminster or Windsor, not the ruler of any great cathedral

DEAN SWIFT

*From a copperplate engraving by Pierre Fourdrinier after a painting by Charles Jervas*

in the rich English midlands, where tradition and wealth and an almost catholic supremacy unite to make the great official of the Church as important as any official of the State—but far from these influences, half as far apart as America is now from the centre of English society, and the sources of power—a native and an ecclesiastic of a country which, the most obstinate Conservative of to-day will not hesitate to allow, was then deeply wronged and cruelly misgoverned by England, many and anxious as have been her efforts since to make amends.

I feel that almost an apology is due to the reader from every writer who undertakes to discuss over again, without any pretence to original lights, or serious individual investigations, the character and story of Swift. It has been already so often dealt with, by those most able to form a literary opinion, so often discussed with the minutest examination of every incident, that there seems nothing now left to say, nothing that can throw any further light upon a problem which has baffled every student. These excellent arguments against reopening the subject, especially by a hand without authority or pretension, are however no more effectual than are the other excellent arguments against doing that which it specially pleases us to do which abound in every path. I am aware of all the risks of criticism I undergo. But I may take refuge in the disrespectful description given, I believe, many years ago of a similar collection of historical sketches, in which the writer was compared to the domestic cicerone in a great house, the respectable housekeeper giving her guidance through

the picture gallery of the historical mansion to a crowd ever renewed of sight-seers. The gentle reader is, like the tourist, a person who is continually renewed. Sometimes the voice of the housekeeper, who shows him the gallery, is not without instruction to him, sometimes it amuses him in the plenitude of his superior knowledge. It is her part to indicate all the personages who stand stately on the walls, and the extreme humility of leaving out one, who may be supposed too great for her comprehension, is a moral virtue not required from her. I venture, with a humble mind, in the same way to say: This is the great Jonathan Swift, once Dean of St. Patrick's, a man of whom most people have already expressed their opinions, of whom I hold my small opinion also. His is one of those mysteries of human nature which will never be found out. Nothing new is ever likely now to turn up to make it more comprehensible. But its interest is endless, even when it is an imperfect hand which traces the strange outline once again.

Among the many strange examples of that far more than republican power (not always most evident in republics) by which a man of native force and genius, however humble, finds his way to the head of affairs and impresses his individuality upon his age, when thousands born to better fortunes are swept away as nobodies, Swift is one of the most remarkable. His origin, though noted by himself, not without a certain pride as from a family of gentry not unknown in their district, was in his own person as lowly and poor as it was almost possible to be. The posthumous son of a poor official in the Dublin law courts, owing his educa-

tion to the kindness, or perhaps less the kindness than the family pride, of an uncle—Swift entered the world as a hanger-on, waiting what fortune and a patron might do for him, a position scarcely comprehensible to young Englishmen nowadays, though then the natural method of advancement. Such a young man in the present day would betake himself to his books with the practical aim of an examination before him, and the hope of immediate admission through that gate to the public service and all that its chances can bestow. It is amusing to speculate what the difference might have been had Jonathan Swift, coming raw with his degree from Trinity College, Dublin, shouldered his robust way to the head of an examination list, and thus made himself at a stroke independent of patronage, and gone forth to reign and rule and distribute justice in India, or pushed himself upwards among the gentlemanly mediocrities of a public office. One asks, Would he have found that method more successful, and endured the desk and the routine of his office, and 'got on' with the head of his department, better than he did the monotony and subjection, the possible slights and spurns of Sir William Temple's household, which he entered half servant half equal, the poor relation, the secretary and companion of that fastidious philosopher? The question may be cut short however by the almost certainty that Swift could not have gained his promotion in any such way. His age had not learned the habit of utilising education, and he was one of the idle youths of fame. 'He was stopped of his degree,' he himself writes in his autobiographical notes, 'for dulness and insufficiency: and at last hardly

admitted in a manner little to his credit, which is called in that college *speciali gratia.*' Recent biographers have striven to prove that this really meant nothing to Swift's discredit; but it is to be supposed that in such a matter he is himself the best authority.

The life of the household of dependents at Moor Park, where young Swift attended Sir William's pleasure in the library, while Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Dingley, the waiting-gentlewomen of a system which now lingers only in courts, hung about my lady, her relations, gossips, servants, is to us extremely difficult to realise, and still more to understand. This little cluster of secondary personages, scarcely at all elevated above the servants with whom they sometimes sat at table, and whose offices they were always liable to be called upon to perform—yet who were all cousins, with gentle blood in their veins and a relationship more or less distinct with the heads of the house, is indeed one of the most curious peculiarities of the age. When we read in one of Macaulay's brilliant sketches, or in Swift's own words, or in the indications given by both history and fiction, that the parson, chaplain perhaps at the great house, humble priest of the parish, found his natural mate in the waiting-maid, it is generally forgotten that the waiting-maid was thus in most cases quite as good as the parson, a gently bred and well-descended woman, like her whom an unkind yet not ignoble fate made into the Stella whom we all know, the mild and modest star of Swift's existence. It was no doubt a step in the transition from the great mediæval household where the squire waited on the knight with a lowliness justified by the

certainty of being himself knight in his turn, and where my lady's service was a noble education, the only school accessible to the young gentlewomen of her connection —down to our own less picturesque and more independent days, in which personal service has ceased to be compatible with the pretensions of any who can assume by the most distant claim to be gentlefolk. The institution is very apparent in Shakespeare's days—the waiting-gentlewomen who surround his heroines being of entirely different metal from the soubrettes of modern comedy. And even such a fine gentleman as John Evelyn, in no need of patronage, was content and proud that his daughter should enter a great household to learn how to comport herself in the world.

In the end of the seventeenth century the dependents perhaps were more absolutely dependent. But even this like most things had its better and worse sides. That a poor widow with her child, like Stella's mother, should find refuge in the house of her wealthy kinswoman, at no heavier cost than that of attending to Lady Temple's linen and laces, and find there such a training for her little girl as might have ended indeed in the rude household of Parson Trulliber, but at the same time might fit her to take her place in a witty and brilliant society, and enter into all the thoughts of the most powerful genius of his time—was no ill fate; nor is there anything that is less than noble and befitting (in theory) in the association of that young man of genius, whatever exercises of patience he might be put to, with the highly cultured man of the world, the ex-ambassador and councillor of kings, under whose

auspices he could learn to understand both books and men, and see the best company of his time, and acquire at second hand all the fruits of a ripe experience. So that perhaps there is something to be said after all for that curious little community at Moor Park where Sir William, like a god, made the day good or evil for his people according as he smiled or frowned, and his young Irish secretary, looking out uneasily upon a world in which his future fate was so unassured, had yet the wonderful chance, once if no more, of explaining English institutions to King William: and in his leisure the amusement of teaching little Esther how to write, and learning from her baby prattle—which must have been the delight of the house, kept up and encouraged by her elders—that 'little language' which has become a sort of synonym for the most intimate and endearing utterances of tenderness. No doubt Sir William himself (who left her a modest little fortune when he died) must have loved to hear the child talk; while even Lady Gifford and the rest, having no responsibility for her parts of speech, kept her a baby as long as possible, and delighted in the pretty jargon to which foolish child-lovers cling in all ages after the little ones themselves have grown too wise to use it more.

Swift left Ireland along with many more in the commotion that succeeded the Revolution of 1688, a very poor and homely lad with nothing but the learning, such as it was, picked up in a somewhat disorderly university career. Through his mother, then living at Leicester, and on the score of humble relationship between Mrs. Swift and Lady Temple, of whom the reader will re-

member the romance and tender history, lately placed before the world in her delightful letters, he was introduced to Sir William Temple's household, but scarcely it would appear at first to any permanent position there. He was engaged, an unfriendly historian says, 'at the rate of £20 a year' as amanuensis and reader, 'but Sir William never favoured him with his conversation, nor allowed him to sit at table with him.' Temple's own account of the position, however, contains nothing at all derogatory to the young man, for whom about a year after he endeavoured, no doubt in accordance with Swift's own wishes, to find a situation with Sir Robert Southwell then going to Ireland as Secretary of State. Sir William describes Swift as of 'a good family in Herefordshire.' 'He has lived in my house, read to me, writ for me and kept all my accounts as far as my small occasions required. He knows Latin and Greek, some French, writes a very good account hand, is very honest and diligent, and has good friends, though they have for the present lost their fortunes,' the great man says, and he recommends the youth 'either as a gentleman to wait on you, or a clerk to write under you, or upon any establishment of the college to recommend him to a fellowship there, which he has a just pretence to.' This shows how little there was in the position of 'a gentleman to wait upon you,' of which the young suitor need have been ashamed.

Swift's own account of his speedy return to Ireland is that it was by advice of the physicians 'who weakly imagined that his native air might be of some use to recover his health,' which he was young enough to have

endangered by the temptations of Sir William's fine gardens: a 'surfeit of fruit' being the innocent cause to which he attributes the disease which haunted him for all the rest of his life. His absence, however, was of very short duration—Sir Robert Southwell apparently having no use for his personal services, or means of preferring him to a fellowship: and he returned to Moor Park in 1690, where he remained for four years. It is quite clear, whatever changes might arise in his politics, that he identified himself entirely with his patron's opinions and even prejudices, and was a loyal and devoted retainer, both then and afterwards. When Sir William became involved in a literary quarrel with the great scholar Bentley, young Swift rushed into the field with a *jeu d'esprit* which has outlived all other records of that controversy. The *Battle of the Books* could scarcely have been written in aid of a hard or contemptuous master. And years after, when he had a house of his own, and had entered upon his independent career, he turned his little rectory garden into a humble imitation of the Dutch paradise which Temple had made to bloom in the wilds of Surrey, with a canal and willow walk like those which were so dear to King William and his courtiers. When Temple died, it was to Swift and not to any of his nephews that Sir William committed the charge of his papers and literary remains. This does not look like a hard bondage on one side or any tyrannical sway on the other, notwithstanding a few often quoted phrases which are taken as implying complaint. 'Don't you remember,' Swift asks long after, 'how I used to be in pain when Sir William Temple

would look cold and out of temper for three or four days, and I used to suspect a hundred reasons.' But these words need not represent anything more than that sensitiveness to the aspect of the person upon whom his prospects and comfort depended, which is inevitable to any individual in a similar position however considerate and friendly the patron may be. The hard-headed and unbending philosopher, James Mill, was just as sensitive to the looks of his kind friend and helper in the early struggles of life, Jeremy Bentham, in whose smug countenance Mill divined unspoken offences with an ingenuity worthy of a self-torturing woman. It was natural indeed that a high-spirited young man should fret and struggle as the years went on and nothing happened to enlarge his horizon beyond the trees of Moor Park. He was sent to King William, as has been said, on one occasion when Temple was unable to wait upon his majesty, to explain to him the expediency of a parliamentary measure; and this was no doubt intended by his patron as a means of bringing him under the king's notice. William would seem to have taken a kind of vague interest in the secretary, which he expressed in an odd way by offering him a captain's commission in a cavalry regiment—an offer which did not tempt Swift: and by teaching him how to cut asparagus 'in the Dutch way,' and to eat up all the stalks, as the dean afterwards in humorous revenge made an unlucky visitor of his own do. But William, notwithstanding these whimsical evidences of favour, neither listened to the young secretary's argument nor gave him a prebend as had been hoped.

In 1694 there seems to have arrived another crisis in Swift's affairs, when the unprogressive nature of his life and the absence of any opening into the greater world produced in him that fiery impatience which belonged to his character and a determination to do something, whatever that something might be. Up to this time he had not taken orders, though his mind must have been quite made up to do so, and he was now supposed to be waiting for the prebend still expected from the king. The result, however, of his restlessness, and no doubt remonstrances, was that Sir William Temple, with perhaps a certain exasperation, offered him 'an employ of about £120 a year' in the Rolls office in Ireland, of which Temple held the sinecure office of master. 'Whereupon,' says Swift's own narrative, 'Mr. Swift told him that since he had now an opportunity of living without being driven into the Church for a maintenance, he was resolved to go to Ireland and take holy orders.' This arbitrary sort of decision to balk his patron's tardy service and take his own way in spite of him, was probably as much owing to a characteristic blaze of temper as to the somewhat fantastic disinterestedness thus put forward, though Swift was never a man greedy of money or disposed to sacrifice his pride to the acquisition of gain, notwithstanding certain traits of miserliness afterwards developed in his character. Sir William was 'extremely angry,' hurt no doubt as many a patron has been by the ingratitude of the dependent who would not trust everything to him, but claimed some freewill in the disposition of his own life. The circumstances both on one side and the other are quite

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE

*From the picture by Sir Peter Lely in the National Portrait Gallery*

within the reach of human experience, and were it not that a great many writers have emulated each other in explaining and re-explaining, this early incident in Swift's life would be simple enough: the young man on the one hand feeling his youth glide away from him, and eager to strike in for himself into the great battle-ground of human affairs instead of continuing the mere confidant and audience of another man, while Temple on the other, wounded by the defection of the youth for whom no doubt he felt that he had done much, and intended to do more, still refused to be drawn into any engagement as to what he would do for him, and took as a personal offence his natural desire to be free and his own master. Had they been uncle and nephew, or even father and son, the same thing might easily have happened.

Swift set out for Dublin full of indignation and excitement, 'everybody judging I did best to leave him'—but alas, in this as in so many cases pride was doomed to speedy downfall. On reaching Dublin, and taking the necessary steps for his ordination, Swift found that it was necessary for him to have a recommendation and certificate from the patron in whose house so many years of his life had been spent. No doubt it must have been a somewhat bitter necessity to bow his head once more before the protector whom he had left in anger, and ask for this. Macaulay describes him as addressing his patron in the language 'of a lacquey or even of a beggar,' but we doubt greatly, if apart from prejudice or the tingle of these unforgetable words, any impartial reader would form such an impression. 'The particulars

expected of me,' Swift writes, 'are what relates to morals and learning, and the reasons of quitting your honour's family—that is whether the last was occasioned by any ill action.' 'Your honour' has a somewhat servile tone in our days, but in Swift's the formality was natural. Lady Gifford, Temple's sister-in-law, in the further quarrels which followed Sir William's death spoke of this as a penitential letter, and perhaps it was not wonderful that she should look on the whole matter with an unfavourable eye. No doubt the ladies of the house thought young Swift an unnatural monster for wishing to go away and thinking himself able to set up for himself without their condescending notice and the godlike philosopher's society and instruction, and were pleased to find his pride so quickly brought down. Sir William, however, it would seem, behaved as a philosopher and a gentleman should, and gave the required recommendation with magnanimity and kindness.

Thus the young man had his way. He got a small benefice in the north of Ireland, the little country parish of Kilroot, in which doubtless he expected that the sense of independence would make up to him for other deprivations. It was near Belfast, among those hard-headed Scotch colonists whom he could never endure. And probably this had something to do with the speedy revulsion of his mind. He remained in this banishment for a year; and it was during this period that he seems for the only time in his life to have thought of marriage. There is in existence a fervent and impassioned letter addressed to the object of his affections, a Miss Joan Waring, whom after the fashion of the time he

called Varina. But he does not seem in this first attempt to have had the usual good fortune which attended his relationships with women. Miss Waring did not respond with the same warmth, indeed was discouraging and coldly prudent. He was still pleading for a favourable answer when there arrived a letter from Moor Park inviting his return, Sir William's pride too having apparently broken down under the effect of the blank made by Swift's absence. He made instant use of this invitation, which must have soothed his injured feelings and restored his self-satisfaction as nothing else could, to shake the resolution of the ungrateful Varina. 'I am once more offered,' he says, 'the advantage to have the same acquaintance with greatness which I formerly enjoyed, and with better prospects of interest,' and though he offers magnanimously 'to forego it all for your sake,' yet it is evident that the proposal had set the blood stirring in his veins, and that the dependence which he had broken loose from, with a kind of desperation, once more seemed to him, unless Varina had been melted by the sacrifice he would have made for her, to be the most desirable thing in the world.

Notwithstanding the evidence thus afforded by his own words and actions, Macaulay and, after him, Thackeray still persistently represent this period of Swift's life as one of unmitigated hardship and suffering. His return to Moor Park is to them a mere return to bondage, and 'the advantage of the acquaintance with greatness,' of which he himself boasts, is not allowed to count in his favour. I have no desire to throw any of the usual stones at Lord Macaulay. When all is said

against him that can be said there still remains a great gratitude due to the brilliant historian who first made English history breathe and burn with all the fascination of the most enthralling tale. But when he studiously shuts out all those higher lights which he can use so wonderfully, and chooses the most contemptuous commonplace of description to reduce and nullify a character or scene which he does not love, the effort is no doubt very exasperating. It is never more so than when, scorning the guidance of facts as well as the sentiment of humanity, he tells us that 'the humble student' made love to a pretty waiting maid who was the chief ornament of the servants' hall—by way of explaining one of the chief incidents of Swift's renewed residence at Moor Park, as well as the exquisite tender story, itself of a more pathetic sweetness than any mere romance of love and marriage, which has since made the name of Stella so well known. There is something in that story which makes it peculiarly barbarous and inhuman to associate it with the common or ridiculous. Marriage, as we are all aware, is the state pronounced to be honourable even by an authority so little inclined to it as S. Paul; but there is a subtle and delicate charm about a relationship in which there was so profound an affection, such perfect confidence, freedom and faith, such playfulness and such devotion, as may be allowed once in a way to stand above the more usual attraction of the common love-story. Hester Johnson was a child of seven when young Swift, 'the humble student,' went first to Moor Park. She was only fifteen when he returned, no longer as a sort of learned man of all work, but on the entreaty of the

patron who felt the want of his company so much as to forget all grievances. He was not now a humble student, Temple's satellite and servant, but his friend and coadjutor, fully versed in all his secrets, and most probably already chosen as the guardian of his fame and the executor of his purposes and wishes—therefore it is not possible that Macaulay's reckless picturesque description could apply to either time. Such an easy picture, however, has more effect upon the general imagination than more careful outlines, and the sting of those terms remains even among those readers who are well enough aware that Swift was not a sort of literary lacquey nor Stella an Abigail.

Whatever the drawbacks were, however, of this second residence at Moor Park, they did not last long. The young Irish clergyman returned eagerly to his acquaintance with greatness in 1695 ; and Sir William Temple died, as Swift records affectionately, on the morning of the 27th January 1699, 'and with him all that was good and amiable among men.' He died, however, leaving the young man who had spent so many years of his life under his wing scarcely better for that long subjection. Swift had a legacy of £100 for his trouble in editing his patron's memoirs, and he got the profits of these memoirs, amounting, Mr. Forster calculates, to £600, which was no inconsiderable legacy ; but no one of the many appointments which were then open to the retainers of the great, and especially to young men of letters, had come in Swift's way. He himself, it is said, 'still believed in the royal pledge for the first prebend that should fall vacant in Westminster or Canterbury' ; but this

was a hope which had accompanied him ever since he expounded constitutional law to King William six years before, and could not be very lively after this long interval.

Thus his life came to a sudden and complete break. The great household, with its easy and uneasy jumble of patrons and dependents, fell asunder and ceased to be. The younger members of the family were jealous of the last bequest, which put the fame of their distinguished relative into the hands of a stranger, and did their best to set Swift down in his proper place and to proclaim how much he was the creature of their uncle's bounty. In the breaking-up which followed there were many curious partings and conjunctions. Hester Johnson, the pet of the great house, to whom Sir William had left a little independence, left her mother's care and joined her fortunes to those of Mrs. Dingley, another dependent and relative of the family, who had also, it would appear, some small means, enough for a spare feminine living, while the girl's mother remained, notwithstanding a second marriage, in the changed household. Perhaps Mrs. Dingley and the girl whom he had taught and petted from her childhood had taken Swift's side in the Gifford-Temple difference, and so got on uneasy terms with the rest of the household, always faithful to my lady? At all events, at the breaking-up, Hester, with her little fortune, separated herself from the connection generally, and, with her elder friend, made an independent new beginning, as Swift was compelled to do. There have been many discussions of almost every point of the relationship between these two; but no one, so far as we are aware, has thrown any light on the ques-

tion why at eighteen the girl should have left her mother and launched herself upon the world, which seems the first thing to be explained, as it afforded a reason for Swift's first interference in her affairs, and threw them into a combination which lasted all their lives.

It is not difficult to imagine the excitement and sense of novelty which was in that universal breaking-up; the troubles and tumults of the departing; the angry lady vexed beyond measure that it should be Swift, the secretary, whose defection she had resented, whom probably she had never forgiven, who had so much power put into his hands and authority what to produce and what to leave out in the great man's memoirs; the partisans on either side hot, angry, indignant; the freshness and expectation of the wide outer world around, in which fortunes had now to be carved out, with no refuge to fall back upon and no means of postponing the inevitable struggle. Swift was thirty-one; too old to be beginning his career, yet young enough to turn with eager zest to the unknown, and not yet embittered by disappointment, although the results of his service with Sir William Temple had come to nothing. A kind of irresistible fate seemed to impel him back to his native country, though he did not love it, and forced him to be an Irishman in spite of himself. The only post that came in his way was a chaplaincy, conjoined with a secretaryship, in the suite of the Earl of Berkeley, appointed one of the Lords-Justices in Ireland, and just then entering upon his duties. Swift accepted the position in hopes that he should be continued as Lord Berkeley's secretary, and possibly go

with him afterwards to more stirring scenes and a larger life; but this expectation was not carried out. That a man thus struggling for a humble post, and anxious to link himself on to a second patron, should have made an application at the same time for the vacant deanery of Derry is a curious example of that topsy-turvy which seems always to have reigned in Irish affairs. He did not get the deanery of Derry, as how should he? a young man quite unqualified for any such post; but he did succeed in getting another Irish living, with a better stipend and in a more favourable position than Kilroot—the parish of Laracor, within twenty miles of Dublin, which, conjoined with a prebend in St. Patrick's and other small additions, brought him in £250 a year—not a bad income for the place and time, and proving that after all, notwithstanding all failures, his time had not been altogether lost.

Swift was naturally, as Lord Berkeley's chaplain, restored to the society he loved, and found a place in the midst of the first company that Ireland could boast, one of a court more extended than Sir William Temple's. And here, for the first time, his sportive faculties, the somewhat lumbering fun which pleased the age, the puns and quips in which the men emulated each other, the merry rhymes that pleased the ladies, came into full play. Swift was always popular with women. He treated them roughly, on many occasions with an arrogance which grew with age; but evidently possessed that charm—a quality by itself and not dependent upon any laws of amiability—which attracts one sex to the other. Lady Berkeley he describes as a woman of 'the most

easy conversation joined with the truest piety'; and her young daughters were lively and charming companions with whom the chaplain soon found himself at home. Notwithstanding his disappointment in respect to the deanery which Lord Berkeley might have procured for him and did not, it would seem that this period of hanging on at the little Irish court was amusing at least. The lively little picture of the inferior members of a great household, which Swift made for the entertainment of the drawing-rooms, on the occasion when Mrs. Francis Harris lost her purse, is one of the most vivid and amusing pictures possible.

His stay in Ireland at this period lasted about two years, during which time the Lady Varina, or Miss Waring, for whom he had been ready to forgo the advantages of Sir William Temple's house and society, seems to have thought better of her decision against him, probably considering the Vicar of Laracor more worthy of her attention than the humble incumbent of Kilroot. But Swift was evidently no longer in the condition of mind which had determined him to be 'all hers' for the rest of life, and probably felt that a wife would clog his own progress in the world; and he was not a man to hesitate in putting the state of matters clearly. Laracor had little accommodation for domestic life; the parsonage was in a ruinous condition, the church a miserable barn, the congregation numbered about twenty persons. All kinds of stories have been collected of Swift's sudden appearance to take possession, alarming the humble curate and his wife who were already there, of his mode of travelling, and of his abrupt

eccentric proceedings, which startled the country-side. The well-known anecdote which describes him as finding his congregation to consist only of his clerk, and beginning the service gravely with 'Dearly beloved Roger,' has found a permanent place in the memory of the world. In all probability it is true; but if not, is so *bene trovato* as to be as good as true. There were not very many claims upon the energies of such a man in such a parish, and when Lord Berkeley was recalled to England, his chaplain went with him. There is no very distinct record of this period of his life. He went to court, always hoping to recall himself to the recollection of the king: he waited on various great personages who might have helped him to promotion but did not; and made the usual appeals for notice which a hanger-on in society is compelled to make; but without any apparent success. He was not yet publicly known as a writer. His *Battle of the Books*, written in defence of Temple against the assaults of Bentley and other critics—or perhaps it is more just to say written in defence of ancient literature against the attacks of the moderns—had been handed about in manuscript for several years, and thus was no doubt known to the true arbiters of literary fame in that age; but it had not yet been printed. He produced, however, at this time his first political pamphlet, which he called *Contests and Dissentions of the Nobles and Commons in Athens and Rome*, thus satirising and commenting upon the existing state of politics; and this, it is said, produced a great sensation, being attributed to several important persons, but did not suffice to introduce its author to fame or success.

Another incident, however, involving a very different kind of interest, made his visit to England in 1700 of the highest importance in Swift's life. The other two members of Sir William Temple's household who had left Moor Park when Swift did, had gone to live very humbly in the little town of Farnham, close to their old home; and there he found them in an uncomfortable lodging, hampered for money and without any object in their lives. Perhaps the object of his visit was to advise and help them; at all events it was most natural that their mutual affairs and prospects should be the subject of many consultations. They had lived together for years, knew everything about each other, and Hester had grown up from childhood under Swift's eyes, his pupil, his favourite and playfellow. She was now, it is true, arrived at an age when other sentiments came in. She must have been about twenty, while he was thirty-four. There was no reason in the world why they should not have married then and there had they so wished. But there seems no appearance or thought of any such desire, and the question was simply, What should they do for the best arrangement of their affairs and pleasantest occupation of their lives? Farnham had not been successful; where should they go? Why not to Ireland, to the neighbourhood of their friend, who could help them into society and give them his own companionship as often as he happened to be there? Here is his own account of the decision:

'I prevailed with her and her dear friend and companion, the other lady,' he says, 'to draw what money they had into Ireland, a great part of their fortunes being in annuities upon

funds. Money was then ten per cent. in Ireland, besides the advantage of returning it, and all necessaries of life at half the price. They complied with my advice, and soon after came over; but I happening to continue some time longer in England, they were much discouraged to live in Dublin, where they were wholly strangers. But the adventure looked so like a frolic, the censure held for some time as if there were a secret history in such a removal; which, however, soon blew off by her excellent conduct. She came over with her friend in the year 1700, and they both lived together until the day of her death (1728).'

This was then the moment which began that which is called the 'sad and mysterious history' of Swift and Stella; a story so strangely told, so obstinately insisted upon as miserable, unnatural, and tragical, that the reader or writer of to-day has scarcely the power of forming an impartial judgment upon it. We have not a word from the woman's side of the question, who is supposed to have passed a melancholy existence of unsatisfied longings and disappointed love by Swift's side, the victim of his capricious affection, neglect, cruelty, and fondness. That she should have wished to marry him, that the affection was passion on her side, and her whole life blighted and overcast by his fantastic repugnance to the common ties of humanity, has been taken for granted by every historian. These writers differ as to Swift's motives, as to the character of his feelings, and even as to the facts of the case; but no one has the slightest doubt what the woman's sentiments must have been. But as a matter of fact we have no evidence at all what Stella's sentiments were. By so much written testimony as remains we are fully entitled to form such

conclusions as we please on Swift's side of the question ; but there is actually no testimony at all upon Stella's side. Appearances of blighted life or unhappiness there are none in anything we know of her. She and her companion had a bad moment when they arrived alone in Dublin, their friend who had promised them so much, being absent ; but that temporary inconvenience was soon overcome. As the ladies appear reflected in that *Journal* to Stella, which is the Dean's only claim upon our affections, they seem thereafter to have lived a most cheerful, lively life. They had a number of friends ; they had their little tea-parties, their cards, their circle of witty society, to which the letters of the absent were a continual amusement and delight. But it is the man, not the woman, who complains of not receiving letters ; it is he, not she, who exhausts every playful wile, every tender art, to keep himself in vivid recollection. Is it perhaps a certain mixture of masculine vanity and tenderness for the gentle feminine creature who never succeeded in getting the man she loved to marry her, and thus failed to attain the highest end of woman, which has moved every biographer of Swift, each man more compassionate than his predecessor, thus to exhaust himself in pity for Stella ? Johnson, Scott, Macaulay, Thackeray, not to mention many lesser names, have all taken her injured innocence to heart. And nobody notes the curious fact that Stella herself never utters any complaint, nor indeed seems to feel the necessity of being unhappy at all, but takes her Dean most cheerfully—laughing, scolding, giving her opinion with all the delightful freedom of a relationship which was at

once nature and choice, the familiar truth and tenderness of old use and wont enhanced by the charm of voluntary association. We see her only as reflected in his letters, in the references he makes to her, and all the tender, sportive allusions to her habits and ways of thinking. The reflection is not in rigid lines of black and white, but an airy and radiant vision, representing anything in the world rather than a downcast and disappointed woman. It is not that either of a wife or a lover; it is more like the wilful, delightful image of a favourite child, a creature confident that everything she does or says will be received with admiration, from the mere fact that it is she who says or does it, and who tyrannises, scoffs, and coaxes with all the elastic brightness of unforced and unimpassioned inclination. It is through this medium alone that Stella is ever visible; and he too laughs, teases, fondles, and adores with the same doting, delightful ease of affection. By what process there has been found through this representation a victim in Stella, and in Swift a tyrannous secret lover crushing her heart, we cannot tell. The external circumstances of their conjunction were no doubt very unusual, and might have lent occasion to much evil speaking. But they did not do so; nobody ventured to assail the good fame of Stella, and Swift took every means to make the perfect innocence of their friendship apparent. She cannot be made out to have suffered in this vulgar way; but it is perhaps to do her a more subtle and less effaceable wrong to represent her as Swift's victim by what is supposed to be a long martyrdom of the heart.

One can well imagine, however, when the two ladies arrived in Dublin, where their friend had no doubt represented to them his power to gain them access into the best society, and found that he did not come, and that they were stranded in a strange place knowing nobody there, some annoyance and disappointment and perhaps anger must have been in their thoughts, and that P.D.D.R., as he is called in the little language, faithless rogue! had his share of abuse: and no doubt it would be believed by good-natured friends that their object in coming was to hunt down the parson and secure him either for the young and lovely girl or the elder woman who was scarcely older than Swift; if not indeed that some 'secret history' more damaging still was at the bottom of the adventure. Insensibly, however, Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Dingley found a place and position for themselves. Swift was often away in the following years, spending about half his time in London; and when he was absent they took possession of his newly repaired and renovated house, or occupied his lodging in Dublin, and gathered friends about them, and went out to their card parties, and played a little and talked, and lived a pleasant life. When he returned they removed to their own rooms. Thus there could be no doubt about the close association between them, which, when it was quite apparent that it meant nothing closer to come, no doubt made everybody wonder. But we have no contemporary evidence that Stella was an object of pity, and her aspect as we see her in all Swift says of her is exactly the reverse, and gives us the impression of a charming and easy-minded woman, a

queen of society in her little circle, enjoying everything that came her way.

As Swift's relations with Stella are the great interest of his life, the subject which occupies every new writer who so much as touches upon him, it is needless to make any excuse for entering into it with an amount of detail which our limited space would otherwise scarcely justify. The mystery about it lends it an endless attraction, and as, whatever it was, it is the one great love of his life, and represents all the private satisfation and comfort he got by means of his affections, it has a permanent interest which most readers will not find in the *Tale of a Tub* or any other of the productions which made the middle period of his life remarkable. For a number of years his life was spent in continual expeditions to London, and struggles for promotion. Though he had begun to make Laracor a sort of earthly paradise with a Dutch flavour, such as he had learnt from his early master, and though it was 'very much for his own satisfaction' that he had procured the establishment of Stella in Ireland, yet neither of these reasons was enough to keep him in the rural quiet among his willows, though he loved them. He hankered after society, after fame and power. He liked to meet with great men, to hear the news, to ride over weaker reasoners, to put forth his own vigorous views on the subjects he cared for, and whip with sharp satire the men who displeased him. Tradition and habit had made him a Whig, and he saw every crevice in the Tory armour, and sent his arrows unerringly to those undefended places. But the Whigs neglected Swift though he was so ready to devote his

talents to their service. They did nothing for himself; and though he is by no means the model of a churchman, it is yet certain that he had a great loyalty to the Church, and that the Whig neglect and indifference to her claims moved him deeply. Always eager to undertake great enterprises, and show his power, he had undertaken to procure for the Irish Church that remission of the offering of first fruits which Queen Anne on her accession had given to the Church of England; and his credit in Ireland was deeply involved in this as much as his personal satisfaction was involved in the promotion he sought. But the existing government played both with him and with his cause. They flattered him with hopes of a bishopric up to the very moment when it was given to another, and made him believe that his suit in respect to the Irish Church was actually won when it was as far from being so as ever. These continual deceptions and disappointments worked upon his passionate temper and that impatience with his actual lot, which grew more desperate with every year of obscurity; and when he set out to London in the autumn of 1710 after the many years that he had waited upon Providence in the ante-rooms of Halifax and Somers and Godolphin, it was with the half threat, half hope: 'I will apply to Mr. Harley who formerly made some advances towards me, and unless he has altered will, I believe, think himself in the right to use me well.' Harley's short day of power was then beginning, and Swift's keen eye perceived the turning of the tide.

By this time he was no longer an insignificant hanger-on, or a poor Irish parson merely gaping for preferment.

The *Tale of a Tub*, one of the greatest of his productions, had been published nearly six years before, and had been received by the world with such universal plaudits as few works even of genius have met with. It was the very incarnation of the time, in its tastes and prejudices, coarseness and learning, as well as such an assault as had never been before made in English upon those falsehoods and vain pretences which are in all generations the unfailing objects of the satirist. Swift caught the follies of his age with a mockery so brilliant, so bitter, so keen and careless, such a riot and madness of fierce laughter and wild banter, the coarsest metaphors, the finest wit, the most terrible and scathing insight, as English satirical writing had never reached before. His object was to set forth the superiority of the Anglican Church above all others by the extraordinary and laborious parable of the three brothers, Peter, Jack, and Martin, of whom Peter, who covered the original coat left to these three by their father with every kind of frippery and ornament, represented the Church of Rome, and Jack, who tore these trappings off so rudely as to rend the garment, the dissenters; while the wise and prudent Martin, keeping but enough for the sake of seemly ornament and running into no violent extremes, was the comely and sober Church as established in England and Ireland, the happy, moderate, unexaggerated *juste milieu*, the safest of guides and refuges. This tale, however, is broken up by a thousand digressions upon the general characteristics of mankind and the age, which are more powerful than the fable itself, throwing into fierce relief as by a blighting

illumination the spiritual landscape of the time, as the blaze of a storm sometimes throws a momentary gleam over the face of a country, making the spectator in an instant aware of its geographical formation, its gleams of water and marshy wastes and pale wild line of sea. The lightning, however, lacks that human power of grim enjoyment and laughter which attends the revelations of the satirist. The *Tale of a Tub* made the most extraordinary commotion in its day. On some readers apparently its effect was pleasurable as of a delightful piece of wit. William Penn sent to the author from America a gammon of bacon, on the score of having been 'often agreeably amused by thy tale'; and a hundred years later it 'delighted beyond description' the robust mind of William Cobbett so that he forgot that he had not supped and preferred the book to a bed. But the effect upon the general mind was perhaps not pleasurable. Many were horrified by its audacious treatment of sacred things, and even the unbounded admiration which it called forth in others was quickened by a certain thrill of horror as the rags of decorum were torn off every figure. The book, now that it has come to the calmer judgment of minds unmoved by the passions of that age, is one of those which form a touchstone of mental character. Like the weird mariner with his mystic tale who knew the man that must hear him wherever encountered, the reader of the *Tale of a Tub*, as perhaps also of Rabelais, must be born with the faculty necessary to understand and admire. To those who have not this qualification it is as impossible to communicate it as it is to explain the

story of the albatross and the curse that accompanied its slayer. The greater part of the public take both for granted, and remain in a respectful ignorance. To such, Swift's work is little better than a dust trap of genius in which there are diamonds and precious things embedded, which flash at every turning over; but the broken bits of treasure are mixed up with choking dust and dreary rubbish as well as the offensive garbage which revolts the searcher. The dedication of the work to Prince Posterity is thus wholly justified and yet a failure. It stands in the highest rank of classic satire, and yet to the mass of readers it is nothing but a name.

This work had been published while Swift was going and coming to London in those endless unfruitful pilgrimages, seeking some work more fit for him than the charge of his half-score of parishioners in Laracor. He did not own it, nor was it indeed ever publicly acknowledged as his, but it was known by many that the Irish visitor who appeared in town from time to time, always in pursuit of something which he never obtained, was the author of the book which had made more commotion than any other of its day, and that he had been hailed by Addison as 'the most agreeable companion, the truest friend, and the greatest genius of his age.' Such a verdict from such an authority must have moved the world of wits to respect and envy, even if his own masterful and imperious character had not very soon made itself felt. There is a story told by all Swift's biographers of his first appearance at the St. James's Coffee House, which is amusing if true; though it is a

little difficult to imagine that Sir William Temple's secretary could be so entirely unknown among the kind of company who frequented the place.

'They had for several successive days observed a strange clergyman come into the coffee-house who seemed entirely unacquainted with any of those who frequented it, and whose custom was to lay down his hat on a table and walk backwards and forwards at a good pace for half-an-hour or an hour, without speaking to any mortal, or seeming in the least to attend to anything that was going forward there. He then used to take up his hat, pay his money at the bar, and walk away without opening his lips. The name he went by among them in consequence was "the mad parson." One particular evening as Mr. Addison and the rest were observing him, they saw him cast his eyes several times on a gentleman in boots who seemed to be just out of the country, and at last advance as intending to address him. Eager to hear what this dumb mad parson had to say, they all quitted their seats to get near him. Swift went up to the country gentleman, and in a very abrupt manner without any previous salute, asked him, "Pray, sir, do you remember any good weather in the world?" The country gentleman, after staring a little at the peculiarity of his manner, answered, "Yes, sir, I remember a great deal of good weather in my time." "That is more," rejoined Swift, "than I can say. I never remember any weather that was not too hot or too cold or too wet or too dry; but, however, God Almighty contrives at the end of the year 'tis all very well." With which remark he took up his hat and without uttering a syllable more, or taking the least notice of any one, walked out of the coffee-house.'

This whimsical humour and love of making the spectators stare was very characteristic of Swift. When he came to town, however, in 1710, the mad parson, dumb no longer, was well-known, admired and feared

among those classic circles of the Augustan age, where Addison liked nothing so well as to find himself *tête-à tête* with the Irishman, and the best of the literary kind surrounded him with good fellowship and admiration. It was the turning-point of his life. He came upon the scene with a fixed and fierce determination in his mind to succeed at all hazards, throwing his previous politics to the winds, and ready for any new opening that might occur to him. Harley, to whom he had made up his mind to turn, gave him a very different reception from that which he had been accustomed to in the ante-chambers of the other statesmen. Himself on his promotion, and catching at every feasible means of securing and establishing his power, he recognised at once the capabilities of the new instrument thus placed at his disposal. Before long the Irish adventurer, the discontented parson, found himself admitted to the closest intercourse with the heads of the government, the bosom friend, called by his Christian name, and sharing the most private consultations of the chief minister, and with at last, so far as appeared, the ball at his foot. He was admitted, or supposed himself to be admitted, to all the secrets of the state, and began instantly to employ his entire powers in the support of his new party, taking up the *Examiner*, the new Tory organ, and converting it at a stroke from the feeble instrument it had been into a powerful agency, of value incalculable in that age of pamphlets, when every event called forth a shower of brochures, each more certain than its predecessor that the facts of the moment were the pivot on which the world turned.

Nor was Swift left without his immediate reward. His first great object, the remission of the payment of the first-fruits, in respect to which the Whig ministry had played with him like a cat with a mouse, driving him frantic with their delays and indifference, was taken up and granted within a month or two, a conclusion very gratifying to Swift, humbling the dull Irish bishops and pettifogging statesmen of Dublin who had kept him from promotion, and who tried even in the moment of triumph to represent him as no commissioner of theirs. Swift was so dazzled by this success, and by the courtship of the minister and the great position to which he felt himself rising, a sort of minister, as the French say, without a portfolio, or, as probably he himself felt, an all-potent influence behind the throne, that he seems for the moment to have asked nothing for himself. The flood of fine company in the midst of which he found himself, his closetings with the ministry, the confidences made to him of state secrets, which it was the *Examiner's* duty to explain and enforce, satisfied his soul; not to say that Harley's promises were many, and that it was understood he was to be finally established in England, presented to the notice of the Queen and placed in every way of preferment. He would seem to have pressed his personal claims less now in his moment of triumph than at any other time. He was full of work and of the excitement of public life. His genius was running at high tide, and every word that came from his lips was listened to and applauded, his name and fame increasing every day. It seems to indicate a certain generosity in his

nature, more than he ever laid claim to, that he should not at this period have insisted on something for himself.

But of all that came from his fertile and brilliant pen at this, or, we may say, at any other period of his life, there is nothing that can be compared with the unpremeditated and careless sheets written before he got up of a morning (save when his bed was on the wrong side so that he had to get up to write), or in the evening when he came home from his entertainments, with the chairmen still wrangling over their sixpences outside—to be sent without the intermission of a day, detailed narratives of his busy life, to the ladies in Dublin, Madam Ppt and Madam Elderly, the two women who shared his every thought. These daily letters, now known in literature as the *Journal to Stella*, are of all Swift's works the only ones that touch the heart. They were not work at all. Publication of any kind never seems to have occurred to him while writing; they are as frank as Pepys and far more noble. They are English history, and London life, and the eighteenth century with its mannerisms and quaintness all in one; and beyond and above every other thing, they are Swift, as he was in his deepest soul, not as he appeared to men, a human being full of tenderness, full of fun and innocent humour, full of genius and individual nature, and above all full of true affection, the warmest domestic love. Passion is not in those delightful pages; but the endearing playfulness, the absolute freedom of self-revelation, the tender intimacy and confidence of members of the same family whose interests and subjects of thought and talk, and merry jests and allusions,

their very pains and pleasures, are one. They describe every day, nay, hour of his life, every little expedition, all the ups and downs of his occupations and progress, in a style of boundless freedom and sportive extravagance, and with the unimpassioned, unabashed adoration of something nearer than a father, more indulgent, more admiring than a brother. Only to a woman could such letters have been addressed; and few women reading them will be disposed to pity Stella or think her life one of blight or injury. Without these the life of the great Dean would not have touched our human sympathies at all, but now that time has let us thus fully into his confidence, and opened to our eyes what was never intended for any but hers, and those of her shadow, her guardian, the humble third in this profound and perfect union, it is with moistened eyes that we read the ever-living record. There is nothing in the coarse and stinging potency of his books which comes within a hundred miles of the delightful life and ease of these outpourings of Swift's innermost soul. The *Tale of a Tub*, the *Battle of the Books*, retain a sort of galvanic existence, but are, for the greater part, insupportable to the honest reader who has no traditions of superior acumen and perception to maintain. But when we turn to the *Journal*, the clean and wholesome pages smile with a cordial life and reality. If there is here and there a phrase too broad for modern ears, it is nothing more than the language of the time, and has not a ghost of evil meaning in it. The big arrogant wit, not unused to bluster and brag, to act like a tyrant and speak like a bully, meets us here defenceless with

the tenderest light upon his face, in his night-cap and without his wig, smiling over little M. D.'s letter in the wintry mornings, snatching a moment at bedtime when he is already 'seepy' and can do nothing but bid 'Nite, dealest dea M. D., nite, deelest logues,' making his mouth, he says, as if it were saying the broken childish words, retiring into the sanctuary of the little language with an infinite sense of consolation and repose. Outside, it may be, he swaggered and defied all men, even his patrons; but here an exquisite softness comes over him, he is unmeaning, silly to all the world, only always understood by the women in that secret circle, where they make their comments on everything that happens, and merrily answer back again with their criticisms, their strictures, no more afraid of that rude, impetuous, angry genius than if he had been the meekest of rural priests. It is this that has got Swift his hold upon many a reader, who, beginning by hating him, the coarse and bitter wit, the fierce misanthrope, the hater of men and crusher of women's hearts, has suddenly found his own melt in his breast to see the giant lay by his thunders and prattle like an old gossip, like a tender mother, father, all in one, in the baby talk that first had opened to him a knowledge of all that is sweetest in life.

We scarcely understand the man, and not at all the woman, who can read without forgiving his brutalities to Swift; as indeed most women who encountered him seem to have done. He would treat the fine ladies with the most imperious rudeness, giving forth his rule, that it was they who should make advances to him, not he to them, yet captivating in the end even those who

resisted. His little language puzzled beyond measure his first editors and expositors, who with a horrified prudery seem to have done their best to interpret and restore it to decorum and dignity; but it has now become one of the points in his story which is most tenderly recollected. A homeless boy with none of the traditions of a family, finding his unlovely life not less but more unpromising in his first experiences of Temple's luxurious English house, what a sudden fountain of sweetness must have welled up to him in the prattle of the delightful child, which was a new revelation to his heart! a revelation of all that kindred meant and delightful intimacy and familiar love. His little star of life never waned to Swift. Stella grew old, but never outgrew the little language; and every young woman had something in her of the sprightly creature that loved to do his bidding, the Ppt who held her own and put him upon his best behaviour so often, yet never was other than the 'deelest little logue' whom he bantered and laughed at with soft tears of tenderness in his eyes. 'Better, thanks to M. D.'s prayers,' he says among the private scribbles of his daily expenditure, which neither she nor any one was ever meant to see.

Nevertheless, at the very moment when his mornings and evenings were spent in the composition of this journal, which is the record of a tender intimacy so remarkable, Swift was entering into a relation which proved the worst and most difficult personal complication of his life. He began to meddle with the education of another girl, incautiously, foolishly, a girl who was not of the uninflammable nature of Stella, but

a hot-headed, passionate creature, who did not at all imagine that the mere

> . . . 'delight he took
> To see the virgin mind her book'

was all Dr. Swift meant by his talk and attention. Swift says nothing of this pupil in his Journal. He mentions his dinner at Mrs. Vanhomrigh's, and her handsome daughter, but he does not tell Madam Ppt that he had given one of his usual caressing names to this girl, whose childish beauty and frank devotion had pleased him. There is indeed no shadow of Vanessa anywhere visible, though the brief mention of her name shows that the second story which was to be so fatally and painfully mingled with the first had already begun.

These three years of Swift's stay in England were the climax of his life. They raised him higher than ever a simple parson had been raised before, and made of him (or so at least he believed) a power in the state. It has been doubted whether he was really so highly trusted, so much built upon as he thought. The great lords who delighted in Swift's talk and called him Jonathan did not perhaps follow his advice and accept his guidance as he supposed. He says jestingly, yet half perhaps with a meaning, that anything that was said between himself and Harley as they travelled weekly in my Lord Treasurer's coach to Windsor might have been told at Charing Cross; but this was a rare admission, and generally he was very full of their schemes and consultations and of his own important share in them. He seems at the same time to have constituted himself the patron of everybody he knew,

really providing for a considerable number and largely undertaking for others, though he got nothing for himself. The following gives an unpleasant view from outside of his demeanour and habits, which is probably true enough, so far as the insight of a hostile eye goes. It is from Bishop Kennet's Diary during the year 1713, the last of Swift's importance.

'Swift came into the coffee-room and had a bow from everybody save me. When I came to the ante-chamber to wait before prayers, Dr. Swift was the principal man of talk and business, and acted as minister of requests. He was soliciting the Earl of Arran to speak to his brother the Duke of Ormond to get a chaplain's place established in the garrison of Hull for Mr. Fiddes, a clergyman in that neighbourhood, who had lately been in jail and published sermons to pay fees. He was promising Mr. Thorold to undertake with my Lord Treasurer, that, according to his position, he should obtain £200 per annum as minister of the English church at Rotterdam. He stopped E. Gwynne, Esq., going in with the red bag to the queen, and told him aloud he had something to say to him from my Lord Treasurer. He talked with the son of Dr. Davenant to be sent abroad, and took out his pocket book and wrote down several things as memoranda to do for him. He turned to the fire and took out his gold watch, and telling him the time of the day, complained it was very late. A gentleman said he was too fast. 'How can I help it,' said the doctor, 'if the courtiers give me a watch that won't go right?' Then he instructed a young nobleman that the best poet in England was Mr. Pope (a Papist) who had begun a translation of Homer into English verse, for which he must have them all subscribe; for, says he, 'the author shall not begin to print till I have a thousand guineas for him.' Lord Treasurer, after leaving the queen, came through the room, beckoning Dr. Swift to follow him; both went off just before prayers.'

But the account of all this patronage and of the brag and general swagger of his demeanour, though it is by no means invisible in the *Journal*, bears a different aspect there, where he tells all about his favours and powers, to please his correspondents, with a good excuse in this tender reason for magnifying all that happens to him. It was indeed a position to turn even the soundest head, and Swift had thirsted all his life for power, for notability, for that buoyant sense of being on the top of the wave which was so contrary to all his experiences. His own account of himself as desiring literary eminence only to make up for the mistake of not being born a lord, is a contemptuous way of stating this thirst he had to be foremost, to be doing, to be capable of moving the world. And he may very well be excused for thinking now that he had done so. Amid the many disappointments of his life he had that three years of triumph which are much for a man to have. If there was a certain vulgarity in his enjoyment of them, there was at the same time a great deal of active kindness; and though he might brag of the services he did, he yet did service, and remembered his friends, and helped as he could those hangers-on and waiters on Providence who in those days were always about a minister's antechamber. And whether he was or was not fully trusted by Harley and St. John, he was at least their most powerful ally, presenting their policy under its best aspect to the world, and giving the gigantic force of his broad shoulders and energetic heave upwards to place them in the highest place.

It is unnecessary to attempt to go over again the

HENRY ST. JOHN, VISCOUNT BOLINGBROKE

*After the picture by Sir Godfrey Kneller, at Petworth*

story of the politics of the time in which he was so powerful an agent. To see Swift moving about in his gown and wig, with his eyes, 'azure as the heavens,' glowing keen from underneath his deep brows, sometimes full of sport and laughter and tender kindness, sometimes with 'something awful' in their look, sometimes dazzling with humorous tyranny and command, is more interesting than to fathom over again for the hundredth time the intrigues of the backstairs, and how Harley won by Abigail while the imperious duchess carried with her a score of statesmen in her fall from favour—or even to trace out by what means the great war that ravaged Europe was brought to an end. When this was accomplished, and the Peace of Utrecht signed (which was but a poor triumph of diplomacy) the Government for which Swift had worked so strenuously began in its turn to totter, as is in all times, and specially was at that time, the fate of governments. The bond between Harley and St. John, men strangely unlike each other, began to slacken when the struggle for power was over, until at last the brilliant Bolingbroke, not so much Swift's friend as his colleague, got the upper hand of the duller Oxford. Thus at the very moment when Swift was justified in expecting a personal recompense, fresh difficulties came in. He had foolishly injured his own prospects by employing his dangerous weapon of satire against the officials of the court in a certain 'Windsor Prophecy,' full of that personal abuse which a coterie is apt to think so clever, though the world in general has the good taste always to be disgusted by it; and this, and the prejudice (most naturally) existing in the

queen's mind that the author of the *Tale of a Tub* was not the man to make a bishop of, once more interposed a barrier in the way of his promotion. Perhaps Harley, who liked him, may have feared to put promotion which would have directed his power into another channel in his way. At all events, it was with a struggle, all other hopes having failed, that at last, just before the fall of his patron, the Deanery of St. Patrick's was secured for Swift. There was a question between that and Windsor, he himself says. Had he gone to Windsor, what a curious change must have come to all his after life! Would Stella have found a red-roofed house under the cloister walls? and the Dean lived perhaps to get the confidence of Queen Caroline, a queen worth pleasing? and looked upon the world with azure eyes softened by prosperity from the storied slopes, and worn his ribbon of the Garter with a proud inflation of the bosom which had always sighed for greatness? How many differences, what softening, expanding, almost elevation, might not the kind hand of fortune work in such great but troubled natures were it allowed to smooth and caress the roughness away!

When Bolingbroke got the upper hand and prepared, if but the queen's shattered life might drag on long enough, to carry out a policy in which Swift agreed, and which would have satisfied both his tastes and aversions, the brag and bluster of intoxicating success gave way in his mind to nobler sentiments. He had run away, if we may use the expression, with a dislike to being present at a catastrophe which was very characteristic, that he might not see Harley's fall; but he did not desert

Harley. While Bolingbroke was bidding eagerly for his services, the new made Dean was offering to share the exile of his patron, to go with him to the country and console him in his downfall. Considering the fascination which power exercises, and on no one more than Swift, this was almost more than could have been expected of him ; and whether his sudden disinterestedness would have lasted, had he been put to a prolonged trial, it would be hard to say. But it is at the same time a question needless to ask ; for a day or two after, Queen Anne died and all was over, and another régime had begun. 'The Earl of Oxford was removed on Tuesday, the queen died on Sunday. What a world is this, and how does fortune banter us!' writes Bolingbroke. It was such a stroke of the irony of fate as Swift himself might have invented, and St. John applauded with the laughter of the philosopher. There was an end of political power for both, and the triumph and greatness of Swift's reflected glory was over without hope of recall.

He had now nothing to do but to return to Ireland so long neglected, the country of his disappointments, which did not love him, and which he did not love ; where his big genius (he thought) had not room enough to turn round in, where society was small and provincial, and life flat and bare, and only a few familiar friends appreciated him or knew what he was. That he was to make himself the idol of that country, a kind of king in it, and gain power of a nobler kind than he had ever wielded, was as yet a secret hidden in the mists of the future to Swift and everybody around. His account of himself when he got home to his dull Deanery, 'a

vast unfurnished house' with a few servants in it, 'all on board wages,' is melancholy enough. 'I live a country life in town, see nobody, and go every day once to prayers, and hope in a few months to grow as stupid as the present situation of affairs will require,' he says; but he consoles himself: 'after all, parsons are not such bad company, especially when they are under subjection; and I let none but such come near me.' A curious statement, in which the great satirist as often before gives a stroke of his idle sword at himself.

But Swift was not long left in this stagnation. Extreme quiet is in many cases but a cover for brewing mischief; and the Dean had not long returned to Ireland when the handsome daughter of Mrs. Vanhomrigh found herself, on her mother's death, drawn to Ireland and the neighbourhood of her former tutor and correspondent. It is curious to find so many links to Ireland in this little company: Stella had a farm in Meath left her by Sir William Temple; Vanessa, 'a small property at Celbridge,' to which it suited her to retire. And thus there were collected together within a short distance, the Dean himself in his dull house, the assured and quiet possessor of his tenderest affections in Dublin near him, and the impassioned girl who had declared for him love of a very different kind at Marley Abbey, within the reach of a ride. That Swift had a heart large enough to admit on his own terms many women is very evident, and that he had a fondness for this new claimant among the rest. In the poem called 'Cadenus and Vanessa' the story of their connection is told from

his side, and shows how his pleasure in his pupil

> 'Was but the master's secret joy
> In school to hear the finest boy,'

and how when he discovered the different thoughts in her mind he was filled with 'shame, disappointment, guilt, remorse,' but no return of passion. The poem ends with some equivocal lines in which the end of the episode is left doubtful, and which have been interpreted as was inevitable in different ways, but which are probably due to the simple fact that the episode was by no means ended at the time they were written, that the lines were intended for Vanessa alone, and that Swift had evidently no desire to break off the relationship violently. Their correspondence went on for nearly ten years. It is a painful correspondence, as the outpouring of a woman's passion for a man who does not respond to it must always be; but Swift never seems to have done anything but discourage and subdue a love so embarrassing and troublesome.

Now, however, comes in the mystery which everybody has discussed without coming to any certain conclusion. All at once, without warning or any preliminary, an event, totally uncongenial to his character, and against all his principles, is said to have occurred in his life. No reason except of the most shadowy kind can be alleged for it, and no result of any description followed. Two years after his return to Ireland in 1716, he is said to have married Stella, thus putting himself at once out of all possibility of marrying Miss Vanhomrigh (which might have been a motive) but with the intention of satisfying Stella as the story goes. This

wonderful tale is so totally unlike truth that it seems to us extraordinary it could ever have been credited. Yet Scott receives the statement as proved, so does Mr. Craik, Swift's last and a most careful biographer. The evidence for it is that Lord Orrery and Dr. Delany, the earliest writers on the subject, both mention it ('if my informations are right,' as the former says,) as a supposition current and universally believed in society: and that the fact was told by the Bishop of Clogher who performed the ceremony to Bishop Berkeley: who told it to his wife, who told it after her husband's death, and long after the event, to George March Berkeley, who finally published the story. But Bishop Berkeley was in Italy at the time, and could not have been told, though he might have had it at second hand from his pupil, the Bishop of Clogher's son. This is all the evidence there is for a fact of so much importance in the life of two well-known people, neither of whom ever acknowledged it, or acted upon it, or in any way, in any letter or document, betrayed the secret. If a disputed inheritance or the legitimacy of a child depended upon such evidence, we wonder what weight it would be allowed to have? But the prevailing conviction of society that such a thing ought to have taken place is a fantastic but not unprecedented reason why it may have sprung into being. Just so, Mr. Bull was told by his father, who was told by Newton, that Cowper meant to marry Mrs. Unwin; and so at the present time wherever a close friendship between man and woman exists (and the very fact of such rumours makes them extremely rare), a belief in some respect or other analogous exists along

with it. Nobody supposes that if the marriage took place at all it was anything more than a mere form. It is said to have been performed in the garden without banns, licence, or any preliminary, and was neither registered nor confided to any legal or other authority. This might form a legal bond, according to Irish law, for anything we know, unlikely as it seems. But we wonder whether the Church would have had nothing to say, had two high dignitaries united in an act so disorderly and contrary to ecclesiastical decorum if to nothing else? It is totally unlike Swift, whose feeling for the Church was strong, to have used her ordinances so disrespectfully, and most unlike all we know of Stella that she should have wished for so utterly false a relationship. However, the question is one which the reader must decide according to his own judgment, and upon which no one can speak with authority. Mr. Forster, we are glad to believe, of all Swift's biographers the most elaborate and anxious, though he did not get so far in his work, yet intimates his disbelief of the story: but he is the only one who does so. It is accepted and believed by all the rest.

We do not need, however, to have recourse to the expedient of this secret marriage in order to explain how Vanessa's existence might have been a pain to Stella. It is one great drawback in such friendships that they are inevitably broken by the marriage of either party. No man would tolerate the existence of another man standing in such a close relationship to his wife, nor could any woman endure it. Marriage is a dangerous

passage even for friendships of the ordinary sort between persons of the same sex, but in the other case is necessarily fatal. And the mere fact that there was another woman in the world who might have married Swift must have inevitably disturbed Stella's peace. Whether Vanessa had heard the rumour of the private marriage, or whether she had been transported into expressions of her suspicion and misery in the hasty letter to Stella, which she wrote at the crisis of her career, either in appeal or in reproach, is equally immaterial. She did write: and Stella offended showed her letter to Swift. Nothing can be more tragic than the events that follow. Swift, in one of those wild bursts of passion characteristic of him, and which were beyond the control of reason, rode out at once to the unfortunate young woman's house. He burst in without a word, threw her own letter on the table before her, and rode off again like a whirlwind. Vanessa came of a short-lived race, and was at thirty-four the last of her family. She never recovered the blow, but died soon after, directing her letters and the poem which contained the story of her love and his cruelty to be published. This was not done for nearly a century; and now more than half of another century has gone: but the story is as full of passion and misery, as unexplained as ever.

This was one of the occupations of Swift's stagnant time. He fled as he had done at the moment of Harley's fall, that at last he might not see what was going to happen. But however guilty he may have been he was bitterly punished. Five years later Stella too died after long suffering. There is a second

apocryphal story told in many ways about her wish to have the apocryphal marriage recognised before she died; but whether it was he or she who thought it 'too late,' or whether there was anything of reality in it at all it is very difficult to say. The fact only remains that Stella did die, following Swift's passionate victim to the grave; and that he spent the rest of his life in a twilight ever more and more clouded till it fell into midnight darkness. He had feared that she might die at the deanery in his absence, with his usual prudish fear of her reputation and his own, or perhaps rather from his usual terror of painful catastrophes, and desire that his house might not be made terrible to him by the shadow of that event. He had reached home, however, before it occurred. After all was over on the evening of the day of Stella's death, the man, distracted, tried to deaden his pain by writing a 'character,' as it was the fashion of that time to call it, of 'the truest, most virtuous and valuable friend I, or perhaps any other person, was ever blessed with.' He returned to the subject on the following night, unable, it is evident, to think of anything else, and continued the sad but sober record till 'my head aches and I can write no more.' On the next evening, still more gloomy, he resumed:

'This is the night of the funeral which my sickness will not suffer me to attend. It is now nine at night, and I am removed into another apartment that I may not see the light in the church, which is just over against the window of my bedchamber.' And then the faltering pen goes on with that panegyric, the story of all she was and did, from which it may be seen that

there was no fault in her. 'There is none like her, none': this is the burden of the old man's subdued and self-restrained tragedy, as it is of the young lover's paean of triumph: 'the truest, most valuable friend' that man ever had: and now she was gone away to be seen no more. He had a lock of her hair somewhere, either given him then or at a brighter moment, which was found after his death, as all the world knows, with these words written upon the paper that contained it: 'Only a woman's hair.' Only all the softness, the brightness, the love and blessing of a life—only all that the heart had to rest upon of human solace—only that—no more. He who had thanked God and M.D.'s prayers for his better health had now no one to pray for him, to receive his confidences. It was over, all that best of life as if it had never been.

But it is unnecessary to dwell upon this oft-expounded text, upon which every writer who has ever named the name of Swift has already found so much to say. It was in the quiet years before this great calamity that he accomplished the greatest literary work of his life, that by which every child knows Swift's name, the travels of the famous Gulliver. The children have made their selection with an unerring judgment which is above criticism, and have taken Lilliput and Brobdingnag into their hearts, rejecting all the rest. That Swift had a meaning bitter and sharp even in the more innocent parts of these immortal fables, and meant to ridicule England and its politicians and generals, and the human race with its wars and glories and endless vanities and foolishness, is evident enough: and that

their first extraordinary success is partly to be attributed to this cause. But the vast majority of its readers have not so much as known that he meant anything except the most amusing and delightful fancy, the keenest comic delineation of impossible circumstances made real by the intense truth and sobriety of the picture. That delightful Irish bishop, if ever he was, who declared that, 'this book was full of improbable lies, and for his part he hardly believed a word of it,' is the only critic we want. '*Gulliver's Travels* is almost the most delightful children's book ever written,' says Mr. Leslie Stephen, no small authority. It had no doubt been talked over and read to the ladies, who it would incidentally appear had not liked the *Tale of a Tub*. But Swift was at home and near them when he wrote, and had no need of a journal in which to communicate his proceedings. Between 1714 and 1726, a dozen years, he was in Ireland without intermission. At the latter date he went to England, probably needing after the shock of Miss Vanhomrigh's death, and the grievous sense which he must have had that it was he who had killed her, a change of scene; and it was then that *Gulliver* was published. The later portions of it, which the children have rejected, we are glad to have no space to dwell upon. The bitterness, passion, and misery of them are beyond parallel. One would like to have any ground for believing that the Houyhnhnms and the rest came into being after Stella's death: but this was not so. She was only a woman, and was not after all of such vital importance in the man's life. Withdrawal from the life he loved, confinement in a narrow sphere, the

disappointment of a soul which felt itself born for greatness, and had tasted the high excitements of power, but now had nothing to do but fight with his archbishop, and give occasion for a hundred anecdotes in the Dublin coteries—had matured the angry passion that was always in him, and soured the sweetness of nature which Stella's companionship alone seems to have brought out. Few people now, however, when they take up their *Gulliver* go beyond Brobdingnag. The rest is like a succession of bad dreams, the confused miseries of a fever. To think that in a deanery, that calm refuge of ecclesiastical luxury, within reach of the Cathedral bells and chants, a brain so dark and distracted, and dreams so terrible, should have found shelter, is very wonderful. They are all the more bitter and appalling from their contrast with the surroundings among which they had their disastrous birth.

The latter part of Swift's life, however, had occasional occupation of a different and nobler kind. The Ireland he knew was so different from the Ireland with which we are acquainted, that to contemplate the two as one is apt to give a sort of moral vertigo, a giddiness of the intellect to the observer. Swift's Ireland was the country of the English-Irish, *ultra* Protestant—like the real Ireland only in the keenness of its politics and the sharpness of its opposition to imperial measures. It was Ireland with a parliament of her own, and many of the privileges which are now the objects of her highest aspirations; but it was unlike in every feature, except in that of being discontented, to anything which is now known by her name. When Swift spoke of the people,

what is now considered the true and only Irish nation, the Catholic masses, who at that moment bore their misery with a patience inconceivable, he described them as of no more importance than a mob of women and children, a race so entirely trodden down and subdued that the politician had no occasion to take them into account at all. The position of the predominant race was almost like that of white men among the natives of a savage country, or at least like that of the English in India, the confident and assured rulers of subject masses. Nevertheless these men were full of a sort of national feeling, and ready to rise up in hot and not ineffectual opposition when need was, and reckoned themselves Irish; whereas no Sahib has ever reckoned himself Indian. The real people of Ireland were held under the severest yoke; but the gentlemen who represented the nation can scarcely be held to have been oppressed. Their complaint was that Englishmen were put into vacant posts, that their wishes were disregarded and their affairs neglected, complaints which even prosperous Scotland has been known to make. They were affected, however, as well as the race which they kept under their feet by the intolerable law which suppressed woollen manufactures in Ireland, and it was on this subject that Swift first broke silence, and expressed the indignation that burned within him. The object of his pamphlet was to recommend such reprisals as the small can employ against the great, by a proposal that the Irish should use Irish manufactures only by way of retaliation. He compared the two countries to Pallas and Arachne in the classic fable, with this aggravation of the

doom pronounced by the goddess against her competitor, 'that the greatest part of our bowels and vitals is extracted without allowing us the liberty of weaving and spinning them.'

The commotion produced by this real and terrible oppression was nothing, however, to that called forth by an innocent attempt to give a copper coinage, the most convenient of circulating mediums, to Ireland. Nothing could have been more harmless, more useful and necessary in fact; and that it should have excited so bitter an opposition exemplifies one of those curious twists of popular misapprehension with which it is impossible to reason—the sole germ of real grievance being that the patent had been granted to one of King George's German favourites, and by her sold to Wood, an Englishman, who was supposed to be about to make an enormous profit out of the country by 'half-pence' not worth the value they claimed. Such an idea stirred the prejudices and fears of the very lowest, and would even now force the ignorant into rage and passion. Whether Swift shared that natural and national, if unreasonable, outburst of indignation and alarm to the full extent he appeared to do, or if he threw himself into it with the instinct of an agitator perceiving the capabilities of the moment, it is difficult to tell. But his *Drapier's Letters* made out of the public outcry so powerful a force of resistance, and excited the entire country into such unanimity and opposition, that the English Government was forced to withdraw from the attempt, and the position of the Irish nation as an oppressed yet not unpowerful entity, still able to face its tyrants and protest

against their careless sway, became distinctly apparent. He who hated Ireland and considered himself an exile in her, claimed for her an independence, a freedom she had never yet possessed, and inspired at once the subject and the ruling race with the sense that they had found a champion capable of all things, and through whom for the first time their voice might be heard in the world.

The immediate result was a popularity beyond bounds. The people he despised were seized with an adoration for him which was shared by the class to which he himself belonged—perhaps the first subject on which they had agreed. 'When he returned from England in 1726 bells were rung, bonfires lighted, and a guard of honour escorted him to the deanery. Towns voted him their freedom and received him as a prince. When Walpole spoke of arresting him, a prudent friend told the minister that the messenger would require a guard of 10,000 soldiers.' When a crowd collected to see an eclipse disturbed him with their noise, Swift sent out to tell them that the event was put off by order of the Dean, and the simple-minded populace dispersed obediently! Had he been so minded, and had he fully understood and loved the race over which his great and troubled spirit had gained such power, what might not have been hoped for Ireland, and what for his own soul, consuming itself in angry inactivity, yet with such a work before him had he but known! But it would have taken a miracle indeed to turn this Englishman born in Ireland, this political Churchman, and hater of Papists and Dissenters, into the saviour of the subject race.

That he was, however, deeply struck by the impression of their misery, and that his soul, always so ready to break forth upon the cruelty, the falsehood, the barbarous misconception of men by men, found in their wrongs a subject upon which he could scarcely exaggerate, is apparent enough. His *Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of the Poor in Ireland from being a Burden to their Parents or Country* is one of those pieces of terrible satire which lacerate the heart. Tears as of blood are in it, a passion of indignant pity and fury and despair. Eat them then, since there is nothing else to be done with them, he says, detailing with elaborate composure the way to do it, and the desirableness of such a supply of delicate food. The reader, unwarned and simple-minded, might almost with a gasp of horror take the proposal for genuine. But Swift's meaning was more terrible even than cannibalism. It was the conviction that these children, the noblest fruit of nature, were in truth its worst embarrassment, the fatal glut of a miserable race without bread for them or hope, that forced its dreadful irony upon him. And what picture could be more terrible than that of the childless old man with his bleeding heart, himself deserted of all that made life sweet, thus facing the world with scorn so infinite that it transcends all symbols of passion, bidding it consume what it had brought forth!

But Swift, unfortunately for himself and her, loved Ireland as little when he thus made himself her champion as he had done throughout his life. At all times his longing eyes were turned towards the country in which life was and power and friends and fame. Though he

was aware that he was growing old and ought to be 'done with this world,' he yet cries aloud his desire to 'get into a better before I was called into the best, and not die here in a rage like a poisoned rat in a hole'—a terrific image, and one of those phrases that burn and glow with a pale light of despair. But he never got into that better world he longed for. The slow years crept over him and he lived on, making existence tolerable by such expedients as he could—a wonderful proof how the body will resist all the frettings of the soul, growing more angry, more desperate, more subject to the bitter passions which had broken forth even in his best days, as he grew older and had fewer reasons for restraining himself. At last the great Dean—the greatest genius of his age, the man of war and battle, of quip and jest, he who had thirsted to be doing through all his life—fell into imbecility and stupor, with occasional wild awakenings into consciousness which were still more terrible. He died, denuded of all things, in 1745, having lived till seventy-eight, in spite of himself.

'Ubi sæva indignatio
Cor ulterius lacerare nequit'

is written on his tomb. No more can fiery wrath and indignation rend him where he lies by Stella's side in the aisle over against his chamber window. The touch of her quiet dust must have soothed, one would think, the last fever that lingered still in his, even after death had done its worst.

# THE JOURNALIST

THE age of Queen Anne was one which abounded in paradoxes and loved them. It was an age when England was full of patriotic policy, yet every statesman was a traitor; when tradition was dear, yet revolution practicable; when speech was gross and manners unrefined, yet the laws of literary composition rigid, and correctness the test of poetry; it was full of high ecclesiasticism and high puritanism, sometimes united in one person. In it ignorance was most profound, yet learning most considered and prominent. An age when Parson Trulliber was not an unfit representative of the rural clergy, yet the public could be interested in such a recondite pleasantry as the *Battle of the Books* seems the strangest self-contradiction; yet so it was. In this paradoxical age no man lived who was a more complete paradox than Defoe. His fame is world-wide, yet all that is generally known of him is one or two of his shortest productions, and his busy life is ignored in the permanent place in literary history which he has secured. His characteristics as apart from his conduct are all those of an honest man; but when that most important part of him is taken into the question it is difficult to pronounce him anything but a knave. His distinguishing literary quality is a minute truth-

fulness to fact which makes it almost impossible not to take what he says for gospel; but his constant inspiration is fiction, not to say in some circumstances falsehood. He spent his life in the highest endeavour that a man can engage in—in the work of persuading and influencing his country, chiefly for her good—and he is remembered by a boys' book, which is indeed the first of boys' books, yet not much more. Through these contradictions we must push our way before we can reach to any clear idea of Defoe, the London tradesman who by times composed almost all the newspapers in London, wrote all the pamphlets, had his finger in every pie, and a share in all that was done, yet got nothing out of it but a damaged reputation and an unhonoured end.

It is curious that something of a similar fate should have happened to the other and greater figure, his contemporary, his enemy, in some respects his fellow-labourer, another and still more brilliant slave of the government which in itself had so little that was brilliant—the great Dean whose name has already appeared so often in these sketches. Swift too, of all his books, is remembered by the book of *The Travels of Gulliver*, which, though full of a satirical purpose unknown to Defoe, has come to rank along with *Robinson Crusoe*. We may say, indeed, that these two books form a class by themselves, of perennial enchantment for the young, and full of a curious and enthralling illusion which even in age we rarely shake off. Swift rises into bitter and terrible tragedy, while Defoe sinks into matter-of-fact and commonplace; but

the shipwrecked sailor on his desolate island and the exile at the courts of Lilliput and Brobdingnag, both in the beginning of their career hold our imaginations captive, and are as fresh and as powerful to-day as when, the one in keen satire, the other in the legitimate way of business, they first made their appearance in the world. It is a singular link between the men who both did Harley's dirty work for him and were subject to a leader so much smaller than themselves.

Daniel Defoe was born in London in 1661, of what would seem to have been a respectable burgher family, only one generation out of the country, which probably was why his father, with yeomen and grazier relations in Northamptonshire, was a butcher in town. The butcher's name, however, was Foe: and whether the Defoe of his son was a mere pleasantry upon his signature of D. Foe, or whether it embodied an intention of setting up for something better than the tradesman's monosyllable, is a quite futile question upon which nobody can throw any light. The boy was well educated according to the capabilities of his kindred in a school at Newington, probably intended for the sons of comfortable dissenting tradesmen who were to be devoted to the ministry, with the assistance in some cases of a fund raised for that purpose. The master was good, and if Defoe attained there even the rudiments of the information he afterwards showed and laid claim to, the education must have been excellent indeed. He claims to have known Latin, Spanish, Italian, French, 'and could read the Greek,' which latter is as much as could have been expected had he

*After a print by Van der Gucht*

been the most advanced of scholars; besides having an acquaintance with science, geography, and history not to be surpassed apparently by any man of his time. 'If I am a blockhead,' he says, 'it was nobody's fault but my own,' his father having 'spared nothing' on his education; much of this information, however, was no doubt picked up in the travels and much knocking about of his early years, of which there is little record. He would seem to have changed his mind about becoming a dissenting minister at an early age, and was probably a youth of somewhat wandering tendencies, as he claims to have been 'out' with Monmouth, and does not appear in any recognised occupation till after that unfortunate attempt. He must have been twenty-four when he first becomes visible as a hosier in Cornhill, which seems a very natural, and indeed rather superior beginning in life for the son of the butcher in Cripplegate. He laid claim afterwards to have been a trader not a shopkeeper, a claim supported more or less from a source not favourable to Defoe, by Oldmixon, who says that his only connection with the trade was that of 'peddling to Portugal,' whatever that may mean. The volume of advice to shopkeepers, which is entitled the *Complete English Tradesman*, written and published in the latter part of his life, though it does not seem to be taken by his biographers in general as any certain indication that he himself made his beginning in a shop, is, nevertheless, full of curious details of the life of the London shopkeeper of his time, to which class he assuredly belonged. We learn from this curious production that vanity was even

more foolish in the eighteenth century than it is now. We are acquainted with sporting shopkeepers who ride to hounds, and with foolish young men who fondly hope to be mistaken for 'swells'; but a shopkeeper with a lackey at his heels passes the power of imagination. It is a droll example of the fallacy of all our fond retrospections and preference of the good old times to find that in Defoe's day this was by no means an extraordinary circumstance. 'The playhouses and balls,' he says, 'are more filled with citizens and young tradesmen than with gentlemen and families of distinction; the shopkeepers wear different garbs than what they were wont to do, are decked out with long wigs and swords, and all the frugal badges of trade are quite disdained and cast aside.' We may take from this book as an illustration of the habits of the age the following description of a young firm which is clearly on the way to ruin.

'They say there are two partners of them, but there had as good be none, for they are never at home or in the shop. One wears a long peruke and a sword I hear, and you see him often at the ball and at court, but very seldom in his shop, or waiting on his customers. And the other, they say, lies abed till eleven o'clock every day, just comes into the shop and shows himself, then stalks about to the tavern to take a whet, then to the coffee-house to hear the news, comes home to dinner at one, takes a long sleep in his chair after it, and about four o'clock comes into the shop for half an hour or thereabouts, then to the tavern where he stays till two in the morning, gets drunk, and is led home by the watch, and so lies till eleven again; and thus he walks round like the hand of a dial, and what will it all come to? They'll certainly break, they can't hold long.'

The account of the shop kept by these two idle masters is equally characteristic.

'There is a good stock of goods in it, but there is nobody to serve but a 'prentice boy or two, and an idle journeyman. One finds them all at play together rather than looking out for customers, and when you come to buy they look as if they did not care whether they showed you anything or no. Then it is a shop always exposed, it is perfectly haunted with thieves and shoplifters, there are nobody but raw boys in it that mind nothing, so that there are more outcries of stop thief! at their door, and more constables fetched to that shop than to all the shops in the street.'

The households of the soberer and more sensible members of the craft Defoe finds also open to grave animadversion; the ladies are too fine, they treat their friends with wine or punch or fine ale, and have their parlours set off with the tea-table and the chocolate-pot and the silver coffee-pot, and oftentimes an ostentation of plate into the bargain. And they keep three or four maid-servants, 'nay, sometimes five,' and some a footman besides, 'for 'tis an ordinary thing to see the tradesmen and shopkeepers of London keep footmen as well as the gentlemen. Witness the infinite number of blue liveries, which are so common now, that they are called tradesmen's liveries, and few gentlemen care to give blue to their servants for that very reason.' Of the maids themselves who ask 'six, seven, nay, eight pounds per annum' for their services, a terrible account is given in a pamphlet published about 1725, where there is a humorous description in the first person of a young woman who comes to apply for the place of housemaid,

evidently maid-of-all-work, to the speaker, who lives with his sister, with a man and a maid for their household. She is so fine that Defoe himself shows her into the parlour, and keeps her company till his sister is ready, thinking her a gentlewoman come to pay a visit.

All these details bring before us the London of his time; the mercers had their shops in Paternoster Row 'where the spacious shops, back warehouses, skylights and other conveniences, made on purpose for their trade, are still to be seen,' where 'they all grew rich and very seldom any failed or miscarried'; and also in Cornhill where Defoe's own establishment was, though there apparently business was carried on wholesale. It appears to him that trade is going downhill fast when this order is changed, when Paul's churchyard is filled with cane-chairmakers and Cornhill with the meanest of trades. Even Cheapside itself, how is it now filled up with shoemakers, toy-shops, and pastry-cooks! Everything is going to destruction, the old trader thinks, shaking his head as he goes through the well-known streets where once the fine ladies sat in their fine coaches standing in two rows. He cannot think but that trade itself is coming to an end when such changes can come to pass. Trade, he says, like vice, has come to a height, and as things decline when they are at their extremes, so trade not only must decline, but has already sensibly declined. It ought to be a comfort to the many timid persons who have lived and prophesied evil since then to hear that Defoe a hundred and fifty years ago had come to this sad conclusion.

He was born into the world he thus describes, in

the atmosphere of shops and counting-houses, where the good tradesman lived in the parlour above or behind his shop, and was called with a bell when need was, and was constant at business 'from seven in the morning till twelve, and from two to nine at night,' the interval being occupied with dinner; where the appearance of the long-flowing periwig and the sword and the man in blue livery were the danger signals, and showed that he must break, he could not hold; where the cry of stop thief! might suddenly be set up in the midst of the traffic and the constable be called to some fainting fine lady, who had got a piece of taffetas or a lace head in her muff, or under her hoop; and where—perhaps the greatest risk of all—a young man of genius who was but a hosier might betray himself in a coffee-house and be visited afterwards by great personages, veiling their lace and embroidery under their cloaks, who wanted a seasonable pamphlet or a newspaper put into the right way. A strange old London, more difficult to put on record in its manners and features than it is to record in pasteboard its outward aspect—where town could be convulsed by a chance broadsheet, and the government propped or wounded to death by an anonymous essayist: where men of letters were secretaries of state, and other men of letters starved in Grub Street, and the masses thanked God they could not read; where a revolution was made for liberty of conscience, yet every office and privilege was barred by a test, and intolerance was the habit of the time.

The author of *Robinson Crusoe* must have got all his ideas in the narrow bustling streets, full of rumours of

wars and commotions, and talk about the scandals of the court, and sight of the finery and licence which revolted, yet exercised some strange fascination upon, the sober dissenting tradesmen who had found the sway of Oliver a hard one. He was born the year after the Restoration, and was no doubt carried out of London post-haste with the rest of his family in the early summer when the roads were crowded with waggons and carts full of women, children, and servants all flying from the Plague. The butcher's little son was but four, but very likely retained a recollection of the crowded ways and strange spectacles of the time; and no doubt he saw in strong excitement and terror, with eyes starting out of their little sockets, the glare of the Great Fire, which burned down all the haunts of the pestilence and cured London by destroying it. At school at Newington, and in the parlour behind the shop, he must have listened to many a grave talk over what was to come of all the wickedness in high places; and, when the papist king came to the throne, many discussions as to how much his new-born liberality was good for, and whether there was any safety in trusting to his indulgences and declarations of liberty of conscience.

Defoe by this time was old enough to speak his own mind. He had left school at nineteen, and till he was twenty-four there is no appearance that he was doing anything, save perhaps picking up notions on trade in general, and, as much as a young dissenter might among his own class, or in the coffee-houses where it was safe, delivering his sentiments upon questions so vital to the welfare of the country. According to his

own statement he had written a pamphlet in 1683 to prove that a Christian power, though popish, was better than the Turk He was now so bold as to tell the dissenters 'he had rather the Church of England should pull our clothes off by fines and forfeitures, than the papists should both fall upon the Church and the dissenters and pull our skins off by fire and faggot.' No doubt he was then about in London, noticing everything, discoursing largely, with a wonderful long-winded, sober enthusiasm, making every statement that occurred to him look like the most certain truth; talking everywhere, in the coffee-house, at the street corners, down in Cripplegate in the paternal parlour, never silent, a swarthy youth with quick, grey eyes and keen, eager features, and large, loquacious mouth. Better be fined and silenced than let in popery to burn you into the bargain; better stand fast in all those deprivations and hold your faith in corners, if need must, than accept suspicious favours, and help to bring in again the Jesuit and the Pope. While Penn with his plausible speech and amiable temper drew his Quaker brethren aside into a dangerous compliance and presented addresses to James, and accepted his grace, this young tradesman would be pressing his very different argument upon the suspicious sombre groups far from St. James's, where there was no finery, but a great deal of determination. And when in the disturbed and confused wretchedness of the time, no man knowing what was about to happen, but sure that some change must come, young Monmouth set up his hapless standard, could it be Defoe's own impulse or the catch

of some eddy of feeling into which he had been swept, which carried him off into the ranks of the adventurer? It is said that three of his fellow-students at Newington figure among the victims of the Bloody Assize. Defoe would always be more disposed to talk than fight. He must, we cannot help thinking, have thought it a feeble proceeding to put yourself in the way of getting your head cut off, when you could use it so much more effectually in convincing your fellow-creatures. His mind, ever so ready to slip through any loop-hole, carried his body off safely out of the clutches of Jeffreys. Probably when he turned up at home, against all hope, after this unlucky escapade, his friends were too thankful to thrust him into the hosier's warehouse, where no doubt he would give himself the air of having sold hose and bought them all his life.

There is, however, nothing to build any account of his life upon in these earlier years. The Revolution filled him with enthusiasm, and King William gained his full and honest support, a support both bold and serviceable, and with nothing in it which was not to his credit. But apparently a man cannot be so good a talker, so active a politician, and follow the rules which he himself laid down for a successful tradesman at the same time. Most likely his mind was never in his hose, and the world was full of so many more exciting matters. Seven years after he had been set up in business, he 'broke' and had to fly, though no further than Bristol apparently, where he made an arrangement with his creditors. He would seem to have failed for the large sum at that time of seventeen thousand

pounds, which he honestly exerted himself to pay, and so far succeeded in doing so that he reduced in a few years his debts to five thousand pounds in all. And what was still more, finding certain of the creditors with whom he had compounded to be poor, after he had paid his composition fully, he made up to them the entire amount of his debt, an unlooked-for and exceptional example of honourable sentiment. Some years later when Defoe had got into notoriety and was the object of a great deal of violent criticism, a contemporary gives this fact on the authority indeed of an anonymous gentleman in a coffee-house only, but it seems to have been generally received as true. The writer was in a company 'where I and everybody else were railing at him' when 'the gentleman took us up with this short speech.'

'Gentlemen,' said he, 'I know this Defoe as well as any of you, for I was one of his creditors, compounded with him and discharged him fully. Several years afterwards he sent for me, and though he was clearly discharged he paid me all the remainder of his debt, voluntary and of his own accord, and he told me that, as far as God should enable him, he intended to do so with everybody. When he had done he desired me to set my hand to a paper to acknowledge it, which I readily did, and found a great many names to the paper before me, and I think myself bound to own it.'

This story bears a suspicious resemblance to Defoe's own style, but it never seems to have met with any contradiction.

Neither his business nor his failure, however, kept him from the active exercise of his literary powers, which he

used in the service of King William with what seems to have been a most genuine and hearty sympathy. Pamphlet after pamphlet came from his pen with an influence upon public opinion which it is difficult to estimate nowadays, but which was certainly much greater than any fugitive political publications could exercise now. He wrote in defence of a standing army, the curious insular prejudice against which was naturally astonishing as well as annoying to the continental prince who had become king of Great Britain. He wrote in support of the war, which to William was a vital necessity but which England was somewhat slow to see in the same light; and most effectively of all he answered the always ready national grumble against foreigners, which was especially angry and thunderous against the Dutchman, by the triumphant doggerel of 'The True-Born Englishman,' the first of Defoe's works which brought his own personality into question. In this strange production he held up to public admiration the pedigree of the race which complained so warmly of every new invasion, and held so high an opinion of itself. 'A true-born Englishman's a contradiction,' he cries, and sets forth step by step the admixtures of new blood which have gone to the formation of the English people, Roman, Saxon, Dane, Norman.

> From this amphibious, ill-born mob began
> That vain, ill-natured thing, an Englishman.

It is not a very delicate hand which traces these, and many another wave of strange ancestors, describing how 'still the ladies loved the conquerors'; but Defoe's rude

lines went straight to the mark. The public had no objection to a coarse touch when it was effective, and Englishmen are rarely offended by ridicule, never, we may say, when it is home-born. The stroke was so true that the native sense of humour was moved by it. Perhaps England did not, on account of Defoe's verses, like the Dutchmen any better, but she acknowledged Tutchin's seditious assault upon the foreigners to be fully answered, and the universal laugh cleared the air.

Eighty thousand copies of this publication were sold, it is said, on the streets, where everybody bought the lampoon which aimed an amusing blow at the race, but gave no individual sting. It also procured for Defoe a personal introduction to the king: whether it was to this or to his former services that he owed a small appointment he held for some years, it is difficult to say; but he was not a man to give his services for nothing at this or any other part of his career.

In the meantime, Defoe resumed his business occupations, and set up a manufactory of pantiles at Tilbury, where he employed a hundred poor labourers, and throve, or seems to have thriven, in his new industry, living in something like luxury, and paying off, as described, his previous debts. His head was full of projects of all kinds, and he recommended many sweeping schemes, and made many bold suggestions on various subjects, from the institution of an income-tax to that of an academy like the French. It was a period when the air was swarming with plans and schemes, and Defoe was not necessarily original in his suggestions; but his brain was teeming with life and energy. He was a man to

whom ideas came as he walked, as he wrote, which he flung off into the air to fly or fall as they might. One thought, one fancy suggested another—and sometimes the contrary of the others—with a conscious contradiction which was delightful to him. For instance, after arguing long and well in favour of the war with France, which was the object of King William's life, and the only thing that could save—according to the ideas of his party on the continent, and eventually of most sound Protestants in England—the Protestant faith, Dèfoe, with a sudden whimsical perception of certain possibilities on the other side, came out with a pamphlet entitled *Reasons Against a War with France*, which was founded on the suggestion that a war with Spain instead would be very profitable, and that the Spanish Indies were a booty well worth having! There is no reason to suppose that this meant anything but a sudden dash into new fields, a delightful way of pulling up short, with a certain gasp of breathless inability to follow the new line of reasoning, the reader whom he had just been, with all his might pursuading, that in fighting France lay the only way of salvation.

William died, however, and the times changed. The High Church came back with Anne into a potency which had been impossible in the unsympathetic reign of the Dutchman, and new fields and fortunes now opened before the pamphleteer. Defoe had been writing much against the practice of Occasional Conformity—that is, the device by which dissenters managed to hold public offices in despite of existing tests, by kneeling

now and then at the altars of the Established Church, and receiving the communion there. Defoe took the highest view of principle in this respect, and denounced the Nonconformists who thus secured office to themselves by the sacrifice of their consciences, 'bowing in the house of Rimmon.' Any religious duty specially performed for the sake of a secular benefit is always suspect and odious, and the obvious argument that a man who could reconcile it with his conscience to join the worship of the Church occasionally for such a motive, might, by a stronger inducement, cease to be a dissenter at all, was unquestionably sound and unassailable in point of logic. He offended the dissenters, to whom he himself belonged, deeply by his protests on this point; but such a course of conduct did not prevent him from rushing into print in defence of the expedient of Occasional Conformity as soon as it was threatened from the other side. There is little difficulty in following the action of his mind in such a question. It was wrong and a deflection from the highest point of duty to sacrifice one's conscience, even occasionally, for the sake of office. But, on the other hand, it was equally wrong to abolish an expedient which broke the severity of the test, and made life possible to the nonconforming classes. The views were contradictory, yet both were true; and it was his nature to see both sides with most impartial good sense, while he felt it to be, if a breach of external consistency, no wrong to defend or assail one side or the other as might seem most necessary. Thus his protests to his dissenting brethren on what he considered a weakness

in them did not in any way prevent him from defending their right to use the expedient permitted if they had a mind; but this is too fine a distinction for the general intelligence.

The discussions on this subject were the occasion of one of the most remarkable performances of his life. When the bill against Occasional Conformity was introduced, to the delight of the High Church party from the Queen downwards, and when the air began to buzz around him with the bluster, hitherto subdued by circumstances, of the reviving party who were so violent against the dissenters, a grimly humorous perception of the capabilities of the occasion seized Defoe. Notwithstanding that he had angered all the sects by his plain speaking, he was a dissenter born, and there is no such way of reconverting a stray Israelite as to hear the Philistines blaspheme. He seized upon the extremest views of the highflyers with characteristic insight, and with a keen consciousness of the power of his weapon used it remorselessly. The *Shortest Way to Deal with Dissenters* is a grave and elaborate collection of the wild threats and violent talk in which, in the intoxication of newly acquired power, the partisans of the Church indulged, with noise and exaggeration proportioned to the self-suppression which had been forced upon them by the panic of a papal restoration under James, and by the domination of the more moderate party during William's reign. They were now at the top of the wave, and could brandish their swords in the eyes of their adversaries; and their talk in some of their

public utterances was as blood-thirsty as if they intended a St. Bartholomew. Defoe took up this frenzied babble, and put it into the form of a grave and practical proposal, as serious as was Swift when he proposed to utilise the superabundant babies of the poor by eating them. In the same way Defoe propounded the easy way to get rid of the dissenters, and the necessity of settling this question for ever. 'Shall any law be given to such wild creatures? Some beasts are for sport, and the huntsman gives them advantages of ground, but some are knocked on the head by all possible ways of violence and surprise.' He says:

''Tis vain to trifle in this matter, the light, foolish handling of them by mulcts, fines, etc. 'Tis their glory and their advantage; if the gallows instead of the counter, and the galleys instead of the fine, were the reward of going to a conventicle to preach or to hear, there would not be so many sufferers. The spirit of martyrdom is over. They that will go to church to be chosen sheriffs and mayors, would go to forty churches rather than be hanged. If one severe law were made and punctually executed, that whoever was found at a conventicle should be banished the nation, and the preacher be hanged, we should soon see an end of the tale. They would all come to church, and one age would make us all one again.

'To talk of 5s. a month for not coming to the sacrament, and 1s. per week for not coming to church, this is such a way of converting people as never was known. This is selling them a liberty to transgress for so much money. If it be not a crime, why don't we give them full licence? and if it be, no price ought to compound for committing it, for that is selling a liberty to people to sin against God and the government.

'If it be a crime of the highest consequence both against

the peace and welfare of the nation, the glory of God, the good of the Church, and the happiness of the soul, let us rank it among capital offences, and let it receive a punishment in proportion to it.

'We hang men for trifles and banish them for things not worth naming; but an offence against God and the Church, against the welfare of the world and the dignity of religion, shall be bought off for 5s. This is such a shame to a Christian government that 'tis with regret I transmit it to posterity.

'If men sin against God, affront His ordinances, rebel against His Church and disobey the precepts of their superiors, let them suffer as such capital crimes deserve, so will religion flourish, and the divided nation be once again united. . . . I am not supposing that all the dissenters in England should be hanged or banished; but, as in cases of rebellions and insurrections, if a few of the ringleaders suffer, the multitude are dismissed, so a few obstinate people being made examples, there's no doubt but that the severity of the law would find a stop in the compliance of the multitude.'

The reader will perceive by what a serious argument the hot-headed fanatic was betrayed and the wiser public put upon their guard. The mirror thus held up to nature with a grotesque twist in it, which made the likeness bewildering, gave London such a sensation as she had not felt for many a day. The wildest excitement arose. At first all parties in the shock of surprise took it for genuine, 'the wisest Churchmen in the nation were deceived by it,' and while some were even so foolish as to receive it with unthinking applause, which was the case according to Oldmixon 'in our two famous universities,' the more sensible reader of the Church party was first indignant with the highflyers for expressing such opinions, and then furious with the

satirist who had insulted the Church by putting them into her mouth. Nobody indeed saw the joke. The Fellow of Cambridge who thanked his bookseller for packing up 'so excellent a treatise' along with the books he had ordered, and considered it 'next to the sacred Bible and holy comments the best book he ever saw'; the soberer Churchman who 'openly exclaimed against the proposal, condemned the warmth that appeared in the clergy, and openly professed that such a man as Sacheverell and his brethren would blow up the foundations of the Church'; and the dissenters who were at once insulted and alarmed by the extraordinary threats thus set forth against them, all alike treated it seriously, and turned upon the perpetrator of the hoax, when he was discovered, with furious indignation. Some 'blushed when they reflected how far they had applauded,' some laboured to prove that it was 'a horrible slander against the Church.' The government, sharing the general commotion, placed Defoe in the position of a revolutionary leader, who 'by the villainous insinuations of that pamphlet would have frightened the dissenters into another rebellion.' Defoe himself seems to have had a moment of panic and fled. He was proclaimed in the *Gazette*, and a reward offered for his discovery. His biographers in general assert that he gave himself up with some generosity, to save the printer and publisher who had been arrested; but there are public documents which seem to prove a different procedure, showing how my Lord Nottingham hunted 'him out,' and how 'the person who discovered Daniel Foe' claimed and was paid

the reward of fifty pounds, offered for the offender, who is described as a 'middle-aged, spare man, about forty years old, of a brown complexion and dark brown coloured hair (but wears a wig), a hooked nose, a sharp chin, grey eyes, and a large mole near his mouth.' However that might be, he was arrested and committed to Newgate in the spring of 1703; and the obnoxious publication, 'this little book, a contemptible pamphlet of but three sheets of paper,' as he describes it, was burned by the common hangman.

It was not, however, till the summer, three or four months after his arrest, that he was tried; and that period he seems to have spent in Newgate in perfect freedom, at least for literary production, since he filled the air with a mist of pamphlets explaining that he meant nothing but a harmless satire at one moment, at another exhorting the dissenters to be content with spiritual freedom, and again bursting forth into the rude but potent strains of the 'Hymn to the Pillory.' He was sentenced to fine and imprisonment, as well as to that grotesque but sometimes terrible instrument of torture; but the pillory had no terrors to Defoe. On the last three days of July, once before the Royal Exchange in Cornhill, where his shop had been, and where no doubt everybody knew him, once in Cheapside, and again at Temple Bar, he stood aloft, with the crowd surging round, and performed his penance. The crowd in those days was not a soft or civil one; when it endorsed the sentence propounded by law, its howls and cries, its missiles and its curses, made the punishment horrible. But the crowd had by this time found

time to take in the joke. Banter when it is broad enough to be intelligible always pleases the general public, and there must have been some *bonhomie* about the sufferer, some good repute as a merry fellow, and one who loved a jest, which conciliated the populace. Instead of dead cats they flung him nosegays, they gathered about his platform—under the low, deep arch which once made a mock gate to the city, and behind the bustling 'Change, and between the shops of Cheapside—holding a series of impromptu festivals, drinking his health, shouting out his new verses, which were sold by thousands in the streets:

> 'Hail, hieroglyphic state machine,
> Contrived to punish fancy in,
> Men that are men, in thee can feel no pain,
> And all thy insignificants disdain.
>
> Exalted on thy stool of state,
> What prospect do I see of sovereign fate.'

The bold satirist looking through those 'lofty loops' recalls all the good men that have stood there, reminding himself that even the learned Selden had the pillory in prospect. Contempt, 'that false new word for shame,' has no power where there is no crime, he declares. The lines are rough, but the sentiments are manly and full of honest scorn, which here and there reaches a high tone. From his platform, where he stood in all the emancipation of feeling that the worst had happened, he threw a bold glance upon the disorders of the time, political and social, and summoned to this post of scorn the firebrands, the cowards, the failures of the age. One can imagine those keen, grey

eyes inspecting through the loops the hoarse and roaming groups, not sure, perhaps, what his reception was to be, gathering courage as the shouts became intelligible, and turned into hurrahs for Defoe. No doubt he marked the fluctuating crowd as keenly as if he had been a careless spectator at a window; and saw Colonel Jack and his brother pickpockets threading devious ways among the multitude, with here and there a gallant from St. James's, in his long-curled periwig fluttering on the edge, and the tradesmen, half-curious, half-unwilling to join in the riot, looking on from their doors. A pillory is a coign of vantage like another when the man upon it has eyes like Defoe's. 'Tell 'em,' he says, apostrophising his platform contemptuously—

> 'Tell 'em the men that placed him here
> Are friends unto the times,
> But at a loss to find his guilt,
> They can't commit his crimes.'

Mr. Burton, in his *Reign of Queen Anne*, quotes from manuscript authority a statement that Penn had been commissioned by Defoe to offer 'an account of all his accomplices in whatsoever he had been concerned' on condition that he should be freed from the pillory—which is a very confusing statement, since it seems impossible to imagine what accomplices he could have had. This, according to the same authority, was considered important enough to call for a special meeting of the Cabinet Council; but 'the queen seems to think that his confession amounts to nothing.' Another account is that Nottingham visited him in prison, and offered him his liberty, if he would say who set him on

to do it. Thus this *jeu d'esprit*, the first exercise of Defoe's special and most characteristic gift, that of endowing a fictitious production with every appearance of reality, set the whole world aflame. It is almost a more astonishing feat than the narratives which look so like literal transcripts of experience; for the subtle power which, by a cunning fitting together of actual utterances, could thus indicate the alarming tendency and danger of a great party, is more wonderful than to create an imaginary man, and trace his every action as if he were a real one. The art may be less noble, but it is more difficult—indeed the *Shortest Way* is about the only example of such an extraordinary achievement. Swift's tremendous satire was more bitter, more scathing, and treated not so much the exaggerated opinions of a class as the cruel and callous indifference of human nature to the sufferings of its slaves and victims.

This curious episode once more ruined Defoe. It is to be supposed that when he went into hiding his business had to be abandoned, and all his affairs got into confusion. The official document already quoted describes him as 'living at Newington Green with his father-in-law, who is a lay elder of a conventicle there.' This description, however, is evidently drawn up by an enemy, since his previous bankruptcy is spoken of as fraudulent, an assertion made nowhere else. His biographer, Wilson, informs us that though he had 'kept his coach' before this period, the pantile works had now to be broken up, and his business was ruined. He had, though there is no information about her, a wife and six children—perhaps supported by the elder at New-

ington, who very likely thought, like his brethren, but badly of Defoe.

He lay in Newgate for nearly a year, without however, to all appearance, losing any opportunity for a pamphlet during the whole time, and laying in grist for his mill amid the strange and terrible surroundings of an eighteenth century prison. Mr. Minto, in the admirable sketch of Defoe which he has contributed to the *English Men of Letters*, seems to think that his hero must have enjoyed himself in this teeming world of new experiences, and that 'he spent many pleasant hours' listening to the tales of his fellow-prisoners. No doubt there must have been some compensation to such a man in making acquaintance with a new aspect of life, but it is perhaps going too far to attribute a possibility of enjoyment to any man in the pandemonium described in so many contemporary narratives. Defoe did, however, what, so far as we are aware, no man before or after him has ever done (if not, perhaps, Leigh Hunt, in whose case we have a vague recollection of similar activity): he originated, wrote, and published a newspaper in his prison, 'The Review,' so-called, 'of the Affairs of France' —that is, of the affairs of Europe and the world, that is, of any political subject that might be uppermost—which was published twice a week, and appeared during the whole time of his imprisonment, a brilliant, familiar, graphic commentary upon all that was happening—a dialogue between the imprisoned spectator of life and the busy world outside in which he was both questioner and answerer, pouring out upon the country, with the keenest understanding of other people's views, and the

most complete mastery of his own, his remarks and criticisms, his judgment and advice. A newspaper in those days was not, of course, the huge broadsheet which it has now grown to. The Review was a sheet of eight, but afterwards of only four, small quarto pages. It was no assemblage of paragraphs, trivial or important, the work of many anonymous persons whose profession it is to manufacture a newspaper, but one man's eager and lively conversation with his countrymen, full of the vigour of personal opinion and the unity of an individual view. A keener intelligence was never brought to the treatment of public affairs, nor a mind more thoughtful, reasonable, and practical. His prejudices were few, too few perhaps. Granted that the aim was good, Defoe was disdainful of punctilio in the way of carrying it out. He was not above doing evil that good might come; but he had a higher refinement of meaning than is usually embraced by such a statement, in his subtle faculty of discovering, and all but proving that what might have seemed evil to a common intelligence was in reality good, if not the best way of carrying an excellent purpose out.

Up to the moment of his leaving Newgate, however, there was nothing equivocal in the use Defoe made of his extraordinary qualities. He was a free man discussing boldly on his own responsibility, and without any *arrière pensée*, the affairs of England. If he had first keenly assailed the dissenters, who were his own people, in respect to the compliances by which they made themselves capable of bearing office, and then exposed to grimmest ridicule the adversaries who

aimed at rendering them altogether incapable, there was in this no real inconsistency. His championship of King William had been honest and thorough; and if he loved to have a finger in every pie, and let loose his opinion at every crisis, there was no contemporary opinion which was better worth having. But now this unwearying critic, this keen observer, this restless, brilliant casuist, this practical man of business, had come to the turning-point of his life.

His liberation from Newgate followed closely upon the advent of Harley to power. When this event happened it is said that one of the first things the new minister did was to send a message to Defoe in prison: 'Pray ask that gentleman what I can do for him?' Whether it was in direct sequence to this question or whether the queen had formed an independent intention of freeing the prisoner we need not inquire. But he was set free, Queen Anne furnishing the means of paying his fine. She is said also to have taken an interest in his family, and contributed to their support during his confinement. He declared himself to be liberated on the condition of writing nothing (further modified as nothing 'which some people might not like') for some years: a condition which he immediately fulfilled by publishing an *Elegy on the Author of the True-born Englishman* to tell the world so, and taking no further notice of the prohibition. The real meaning of this curious statement would seem by all evidence to have been, that Defoe there and then accepted the position of a secret servant of the government, a writer pledged to support their measures and carry out their views. At the

moment, and perhaps in reality during the greater part of his career, their measures were those which he approved, and certainly at this period of his history he had never been accused of writing against his conscience. Even when, after eager championship of peace, he was obliged by political changes to veer into what looked like support of war, he was never without the strong defence to fall back upon, that he had demanded peace only after securing certain indispensable conditions, and that war might be and was the only means of gaining these conditions, an argument most simple and evident to his mind.

Harley has never appeared in history as a great man; but when we consider that he was able thus to subjugate and secure to his own service two of the greatest intelligences of his time, it is impossible not to respect his influence and judgment. The great and sombre genius of Swift, the daring, brilliant, and ever-ready intellect of Defoe, became instruments in the hand of this ordinary and scheming statesman. Once more, with a curious parallelism, these two men stand before us, no friends to each other: 'an illiterate fellow whose name I forget,' says Swift, with the almost brutal scorn which was part of his character, while Defoe replies to the taunt with angry virulence, setting forth his own acquirements, 'though he wrote no bill at his door, nor set Latin on the front of his productions,' a piece of pretension habitual to the time, of which the other was guilty. But Harley, who was not worthy, as far as intellect went, to clean the shoes of either, had them both at his command, serving his purposes, doing his bidding. Which of them suffered most by the connec-

tion it is not easy to say. It turned Swift's head, and brought into humiliating demonstration the braggart and the bully in his nature. Defoe had not the demoralising chance of being the Lord Treasurer's boon companion. But Harley made a dishonest partisan, a paid and slippery special pleader and secret agent, out of the free lance of politics. From this moment the defenders and champions of Defoe have to turn into casuists as he himself did. They have to give specious explanations, to suppress and to account for his shifts and changes, though at first these were sufficiently innocent. The evil grew, however, so that towards the end of his career even the apologist is forced to keep silence; but this is the nature of all evil.

If excuses are to be sought for Defoe's conduct in the first beginning of his slavery, it will not be difficult to find them. The age for one thing was corrupt through and through; there was not a statesman but had two strings to his bow, nor a politician of any description who did not attempt to serve two masters. To hold the balance between Hanover and St. Germains, ready to perform a demivolt in air at any moment, as the scale should turn, was the science of the day. On the other hand, he was a ruined man, with a family to support, and now nothing but his busy and inexhaustible pen to do it with. The material inducement of a certain income to fall back upon, whatever might be the chances of journalism, must have been very strong. And what was stronger still was the delight of his own vivacious, restless, ready mind, with its sense of boundless power and infinite resource, to which difficulty was

a delight, and the exercise of walking over hot coals or dancing on a sword-point the most exhilarating possibility, to make its triumphant way over obstacles which would have baffled almost all his contemporaries. 'The danger's self was lure alone' to this skilled and cunning fencer, this master of all the arts. In a very different sense from that of Tennyson's noble hero, 'faith unfaithful' was inspiration and strength to him, and to be falsely true the most delightful situation. He loved to support his principles by a hundred dodges, and plead them from the other side, and make of himself the devil's advocate in the interest of Heaven. All this was easy and delightful to his mind. He must have had a positive pleasure in proving to himself that to support the Tory measures, from a Whig point of view, was the most ingenious, the most exciting and amusing thing that ever a clever writer had to do, with just that spice of mischief and mystification in it which gave the work a double zest. Allegiance to the queen required a change of policy on his part, whenever circumstances compelled her to change her ministry. It was all devotion, not time-serving as the vulgar thought. Defoe took infinite pleasure in proving that it was so, in making everything clear. The commonplace and humdrum expedient of following your party would have been dull to him, a proceeding without interest as without danger. He wanted excitement, obstacles to get over, a position which would make sudden claims upon his ingenuity to account for and fortify it. Such a mind is rare, and still more rarely is it accompanied by genius. But it is a very curious spectacle when such a combination does occur.

In the meantime, however, all that Defoe had to do was simple enough. He had to support peace and the Union, two things which in his free estate he had already advocated with all his powers. He did it with the utmost skill, fervour, and success, and to all appearance contributed much to the great public act which was the subject of so many struggles, and resistances on the part of the smaller nation. This great expedient, of which from the first he had seen the advantage, Defoe worked for with unwearying zeal. He praised and caressed Caledonia—upon which subject he wrote one of those vigorous essays in verse which he called poetry —and the tolerance of the Presbyterian church, and the good sense of the nation generally, which was not always perceptible to English politicians: and even risked a visit to Edinburgh in performance of the orders of the government, though at the risk of rude handling to himself. In all this there cannot be the slightest doubt that he was entirely honest and patriotic, and acted from an enlightened personal view of the necessities of the case. In these circumstances he probably felt himself entitled to assert and insist upon his independence. 'I contemn,' he says, 'as not worth mentioning the suggestions of some people of my being employed to carry on the interests of a party. I have never loved any party, but with my utmost zeal have sincerely espoused the great and original interest of this nation, and of all nations, I mean truth and liberty'; which was true enough, yet not all the truth. Again, with still more violent protestations, he refers to his private circumstances, of which nothing is known, to prove how little

he was protected by power. It would seem from this statement that he was still being pursued for the remnant of old debts, or those new ones which the failure of his tile factory and his long imprisonment had saddled him with.

'If paid, gentlemen, for writing,' he cries, 'if hired, if employed, why still harassed with merciless and malicious men, why pursued to all extremities of law for old accounts which you clear other men of every day? Why oppressed, distressed, and driven from his family, and from all his prospects of delivering them and himself? Is this the fate of men employed and hired? Is this the figure the agents of courts and princes make?'

The argument is a feeble one for such a practised reasoner as Defoe, without considering the trifling detail that it was untrue. For debts are by no means unknown to favourites of the crown, nor could he have been saved by Harley's pay, which probably was never very great, from the consequences of previous misfortunes. The reader will think that a judicious silence would have been more appropriate. But that was not Defoe's way; the only wonder is that he did not adduce such detailed evidence of his own freedom as would have deceived any man, and shown to demonstration that it was he who subsidised the ministry and not they him. And a greater wonder still is that he was actually free through all, maintaining his own favourite opinions, working as an independent power. Servile journalists have existed in plenty, but seldom one who took the pay of his masters and served their interests, yet fought under his own flag with honesty and a good conscience all the while.

This happy state, however, did not last. Harley fell; but with his last breath (as a minister) adjured his champion not to sacrifice himself, but to come to an understanding with his successor Godolphin. This necessitated a certain revolution of sentiment in respect to peace, which Defoe managed cleverly by means of the excellent device above mentioned. And in this matter there was still higher ground which he felt himself entitled to take. The public safety was involved in the stability of the new ministry such as it was, and he faced the dilemma with boundless pluck and assurance. 'Though I don't like the crew I won't seize the ship. I'll pump and heave and haul, and do everything I can, though he that pulls with me were my enemy. The reason is plain. We are all in the ship and must sink or swim together.' These admirable reasonings brought him at last to the calm rectitude of the following conclusion:—

'It occurred to me instantly as a principle for my conduct, that it was not material to me what ministers her Majesty was pleased to employ; my duty was to go along with every minister, so far as they did not break in upon the Constitution and the laws and liberties of my country, my part being only the duty of a subject, viz.: to submit to all lawful commands, and to enter into no service that was not justifiable by the laws, to all of which I have exactly obliged myself.'

When Harley returned to power, another modification became necessary, but Defoe piously felt it was providential that he should thus be thrown back upon his original protector. And had the matter ended here, as was long supposed, it is difficult to see what indict-

HARLEY, EARL OF OXFORD

*After the original painting by Sir Godfrey Kneller*

ment could be brought against him. It is not expedient, certainly, that a director of public opinion should have state pay, and does not look well when the secret is betrayed; but so long as the scope of all his productions is good, honest, and patriotic, with only as much submission in trifles as is inevitable, the bargain is a personal meanness rather than a public crime. And this was long supposed to have been the case. It was believed that after the death of Queen Anne and Harley's final fall, Defoe's eloquent mouth was closed, and that he disappeared into the calm of private life to earn a better hire and a more lasting influence through the two immortal works of fiction, by which alone, but for the painful labours of biographers, his name would have been known. Had the matter been left so, how much happier it would have been for the hero of this romance of literary life, how much more edifying for posterity! We could have imagined the tired warrior retiring from that hot and painful field, in which even the laurels were not worth the plucking, where defeat was miserable and success mean, and scarcely any combatant could keep his honour intact—to the quietness of some suburban house, in which his three pretty daughters could love and care for him, and where his wonderful imagination, no longer a slave to the exigencies of political warfare, could weave its dreams into the soberest certainty of life. We should then have said of the author of *Robinson Crusoe* and the *Journal of the Plague*, that, in his poverty and anxiety and overhaste, he had been beguiled into a bargain, which might have been a shameful one, had not his marvellous power of

seeing every side of a subject, and that insight of genius which divines the real unity of honest souls through all the external diversities which fill the limited vision of common men, carried him triumphantly through. And upon what real fault there was we should have thrown a veil. The age would have borne the blame, an age which was corrupt to the core, and in which men changed their principles every day. In the garden at Newington, where the young ladies entertained their lovers, we could have pictured him benevolent and friendly in the flowing peruke, under which his keen eyes sparkled, looking on at the love-making; with prudent tradesmanlike thoughts of Sophia's portion, and how much the young people would have to set up housekeeping upon, coming in not inappropriately between the pages of *Crusoe*; perhaps taking a suggestion about Robinson's larder from some passing talk concerning the store-room, or modifying for the use of Friday some rustical remark of the young serving-man from the country; or in the renewing of old recollections produced by some old friend's visit finding an anecdote, a detail to incorporate into the *Journal of the Plague.* And we should have asked ourselves by what strange play of genius the unenchanted island, where all the sober elaborations of fact clothed so completely the vivid dream of imagination, should have risen out of the mists amid those trim, old-fashioned alleys, and green plots, and stiff parterres of flowers.

Alas! that demon of research, which in its poking and prying sometimes puts old bones together, and sometimes scatters to the winds the ashes of the dead,

has spoiled this pleasant picture. Impelled by its influence, an unwary or else too painstaking student some twenty years ago was seized with the idea of roaming the earth in search of relics of Defoe. And the diabolical powers which put this fatal pursuit into his mind directed him to a bundle of yellow papers in the State Paper office, which have, alas! for ever and ever made an end of our man of genius. These treacherous papers give us to wit under his own hand that he was in reality in full action in the most traitorous of employments during the period of his supposed retirement. The following, which is the first of these fatally self-elucidatory letters, will reveal at once the inconceivable occupation to which Defoe, in his downfall, lent himself. He had perhaps compromised himself too much, and been too completely identified with Harley at the end, to be considered capable of more honourable employment. The letter is addressed to the secretary of the minister who had given him his disgraceful office:

'It was proposed by my Lord Townshend that I should appear as if I were as before, under the displeasure of the government, and separated from the Whigs; and that I might be more serviceable in a kind of disguise than if I appeared openly. . . . . In the interval of this, Dyer, the news-letter writer, having been dead, and Dormer, his successor, being unable by his troubles to carry on that work, I had an offer of a share in the property, as well as in the management of that work.

'I immediately acquainted my Lord Townshend of it, who, by Mr. Buckley, let me know it would be a very acceptable piece of service, for that letter was really very prejudicial to the public, and the most difficult to come at in a judicial

way in case of offence given. My lord was pleased to add, by Mr. Buckley, that he would combine my service in that case, as he afterwards did.

'Upon this I engaged in it, and that so far, that though the property was not wholly my own, yet the conduct and government of the style of news was so entirely in me, that I ventured to assure his lordship the sting of that mischievous paper should be entirely taken out, though it was granted that the style should continue Tory as it was, that the party might be amused, and not set up another, which would have destroyed the design; and this part I, therefore, take entirely on myself still.

'This went on for a year before my Lord Townshend went out of office, and his Lordship, in consideration of the service, made me the appointment which Mr. Buckley knows of, with promise of a further allowance as service presented.

'My Lord Sunderland, to whose goodness I had many years ago been obliged when I was in a secret commission sent to Scotland, was pleased to approve and continue this service and the appointment annexed, and with his Lordship's approbation I introduced myself, in the disguise of a translator of the foreign news, to be so far concerned in this weekly paper of Mist's as to be able to keep it within the circle of a secret management, also prevent the mischievous part of it, and yet neither Mist or any of those concerned with him have the least guess of suspicion by whose direction I do it.'

There is nothing, it seems to us, for any apologist to say in explanation of this extraordinary statement. The emissary of a Whig and Hanoverian Government, acting as editor of a Tory and Jacobite newspaper, nay, of three newspapers, in order to take the harm out of them, to amuse the Tory party with a pretence of style and subjects suitable to their views, while balking all their purposes, is at once the most ingenious and the

most shameless of devices. It continued for a long period, and was very successful. But when the deceit was discovered at last, Mist, the deluded publisher, made a murderous assault upon the deceiver, and the journalists of the period seem to have risen unanimously against him. That Defoe must have fallen sadly before he came to this, is very evident; but how he fell, except by the natural action of a deteriorating principle which makes a man who has long paltered with the truth unable at last to distinguish the gradations which separate the doubtful from the criminal, no one can say. He must, however, have fallen indeed in position and importance before he could be put to such miserable work; and he must have fallen more fatally still, like that other Son of the Morning, deep down into Hades where he became the father of lies and betrayer of mankind, before he could have been capable of such an infamous mission.

We turn with relief to the work which of all these manifold labours is the only portion which has really survived the effects of time, Defoe's political writings, with all their lucidity, their brilliant good sense and daring satire and astonishing readiness and variety, are for the student, and retain a place only among the materials of history, studied no longer for their own sake but for the elucidations they may chance to give. But *Robinson Crusoe* lives by his own right, and will, we may confidently affirm, after the long trial he has had, never die. We need not discuss Defoe's other works of fiction, which are all as characteristic, as distinct narratives of the apparent fact, as carefully

elaborated in every detail. They are almost all excellent in their beginning, but, a fault which is shared by *Crusoe* himself, run into such a prodigality of detail towards their close that the absence of dramatic construction and of any real inspiration of art, becomes painfully—or rather tediously, which is worse—apparent. We do not, however, share the opinion of those critics who disparage Defoe's marvellous power of narrative. 'The little art he is truly master of, of forging a story and imposing it on the world for truth' is an art which is possessed by very few, and which Defoe had in a very complete and unusual kind. It is not one of the higher developments of fiction. We are not moved by it to pity or tenderness, or to the admiration of heroic qualities, or to the exercise of those sympathies which the sight of human passion, emotion, or suffering calls forth: the inner circle of our feelings is seldom if ever entered. But on the other hand, there is nothing in that island where the shipwrecked mariner finds a shelter, and which he makes into a home, which we do not know and see as well as if we had dwelt in it like Robinson. It is an island which is added to the geography of the world. Not only would no child ever doubt of its existence, but to the most experienced reader it is far more true and real than half of those of which we have authentic histories, which our relatives and countrymen have visited and colonised. The South Sea Islands, about which we have so many flowery volumes, are not half so certain. And every detail of the life of its solitary inhabitant comes up before us like our own personal proceedings, more than

visible, incontestable experiences. Not one of us but could draw the picture of the solitary in his furs with all his odd implements about him; and more wonderful still, not a child, from four upwards, but would recognise and name the picture. The tale does not move us as do imaginative histories on a more poetic level, but in its humbler range it is as living as the best. And there is something in this very absence of emotion which gives a still more wonderful force to the narrative. Men in such desperate circumstances, driven to the use of all their faculties for the mere preservation of their lives, have presumably but little time for feeling. The absorption of every faculty in this one primitive need brings a certain serenity, a calm which is like the hush of the solitude, the silence of the seas. The atmosphere is full of this stillness; it is the repose of nature, not filled with reflections of human sentiment, but imposing her patience, her calm repetition of endless endeavour upon the solitary flung into her bosom: and there is a sobriety in the story which adds immensely to its power. Other unknown islands have existed in fiction, but none where the progress of events was so gradual, where there were so few miraculous accessories. One of the most able of English romancers, the late Charles Reade, is almost the last who has carried us to a desolate island. His story is full of charm, of humour and sentiment far beyond the reach of Defoe. Nothing could be more tender, more delightful than the idyll of the two lovers cut off from all mankind, lost in the silence of the seas; but in every way his isle is an enchanted isle. Not only is it peopled with love and all the graces, but

it is running over with every convenience, everything that is useful and beautiful. The inexhaustible ingenuity of the lover is not more remarkable than the wealth of necessary articles of every kind that turn up at every step. He builds his lady a bower lined with mother-of-pearl, he clothes her in a cloak of seal skin, he finds jewels for her. She has but to wish and to have, as if Regent Street had been within reach. Very different is the sober sanity of the elder narrative. Defoe knows nothing about lovers; all his heroes marry with prodigality, but he has no love, any more than he has pearls or gutta-percha, on his island. Conveniences come very slowly to Robinson Crusoe; he has to grope his way, and find his living hardly, patiently. Day after day and year after year, the story-teller goes on working out the order of events. It is as leisurely as nature, as little helped by accident, as sober, even as matter-of-fact; and yet what a potent, clear, all-realising fancy, a faculty which in its limited sphere saw and felt and acted in completest appropriation of the circumstances—this sober imagination was!

He was fifty-eight at the time this book was written, a man worn with endless work and strife, but ever ready for more; a man who had fallen and failed, and, notwithstanding the work and labour of a giant, made but little of his life. It is said that he was at his highest point of external prosperity when he published *Robinson Crusoe*; but when we remember that he was at that time engaged in the inconceivable muddle of Mist's journal, it seems almost impossible to believe this, or to understand how anything but poverty could

have driven him into such a disgraceful employment. No doubt to a man who at heart had once been an honest man and was so no more, it must have been a relief and blessed deliverance to escape away into the distant seas, to refresh his ever active soul with the ingenious devices of the shipwrecked sailor and bury himself in that life so different from his own, the savage necessities, the primitive cares. The goats and the parrot and poor Friday, what an ease and comfort to escape into their society after bamboozling Mist, and reporting to my lord at St. James's! Was it a desperate expedient of nature to save him from utter self-contempt? Such a man, even if his conscience had grown callous, must have required some outlet from the dreadful slavery to which he had bound himself.

*Robinson Crusoe* is the work by which Defoe is best known ; which is after all the most effectual proof that it is his best work ; but it is not, to our thinking, worthy of being placed in competition with the *Journal of the Plague*, a history so real, so solemn and impressive, so full of the atmosphere and sentiment of the time, that it reaches a far higher point of literary art than anything else Defoe has written ; for this is not invention alone, nor that art of making fiction look like truth, which is supposed to be his greatest excellence. It is one of the most impressive pictures of a historical incident which has struck the poetic imagination everywhere, and of which we have perhaps more authentic pictures than of any other kind of historical episode. Neither Boccaccio nor Manzoni has equalled Defoe in the story of the plague. To the old Italian it was a horror from which

the life-loving fled with loathing as well as fear, and which they tried to forget and put out of their sight. Defoe's minute description of the argument carried on within his own mind by the narrator is curiously characteristic of the tendency to elaborate and explain which enters so largely into all his works. The mental condition of the respectable citizen, divided between concern for his life and concern for his property, seeing with reasonable eyes that death was not certain, but that in case of flight ruin was; moved by the divination which he uses in all good faith, yet perhaps not with sufficient devoutness to have allowed himself to be guided by it had it been contrary to his previous dispositions, and at bottom by a certain *vis inertiæ* and disinclination to move, which is clearly indicated from the beginning—is a picture in his best manner, and so real, that it is impossible to resist its air of absolute truthfulness. But the state of the shut-up streets, the dreadful sounds and sights, the brooding rest and stillness of the long and awful days, the cloud of fate that is about the doomed city are beyond description impressive. This curious spectator of all things, this impartial yet eager looker-on, determined to see all that could be seen, prudent, yet fearless, adopting every precaution, yet neglecting no means of investigation, inquiring everywhere, always with his eyes and his ears open, at once a philosophical inquirer and an eager gossip, is without doubt Defoe himself: but he is also a marked figure of the time. He is like Pepys; he is almost, but for the unmistakable difference between the bourgeois and the fine gentleman, like Evelyn. He is one of the special kind of man born to

illustrate that period. Pepys would have found means for some piece of junketting even in the midst of his alarm, whereas Defoe thinks of his property only, when he has time to think of anything but the plague. But they are at bottom the same. While, however, this central figure remains the characteristic but not elevated personage with whom we are already acquainted, the history which he records is done with a tragic force and completeness which it is impossible to surpass. In this there is nothing commonplace, no wearying monotony. The very statistics have a tragic solemnity in them, the awful unseen presence dominates everything. We scarcely breathe while we move about the streets emptied of all passers-by, or with a suspicious line of pedestrians in the middle of the way, keeping as far apart as possible from the houses. This is not mere prose, it is poetry in its most rare form; it is an ideal representation, in all its sober details, of one of the most tragical moments of human suffering and fate.

Nothing else that Defoe has done is on the same level; it was pitched on too high a key perhaps for the multitude. His innocent thief, Colonel Jack, begins with a picture, both amusing and touching, of the curious moral denseness and confusion of a street boy; his *Cavalier* is a charming young man, but both of these, and all the rest of Defoe's heroes and heroines, grow heavy and tedious at the end. The *Journal of the Plague* is not like this. The conclusion, the sudden surprise and half-delirious sense of relief, the joy which makes the passers-by stop and shake hands with each other in the streets, and the women call out from their

windows with tears and outcries of gladness, is sudden and overwhelming as the reality. We are caught in the growing despair, and suddenly in a moment deliverance comes. Here alone Defoe is not too long: the unexpected is brought in with a skill and force not less remarkable than that which, in the previous pages, has portrayed the slow growth and inevitable development of the misery. Up to this anti-climax of unlooked-for joy, the calamity has grown, every new touch intensifying the awful reality. But the recovery is sudden, and told without an unnecessary word. It is the only instance in which Defoe has followed the instinct of a great artist and shown that he knew how to avail himself of the unwritten code and infallible methods of art.

We forget his shortcomings when we discuss this, which is to our minds much his greatest work, and it is well that we should leave him in this disposition. He died mysteriously alone, after a period of wandering and hiding which nobody can explain. Whether he was in trouble with creditors or with political enemies, or with the exasperated party which he had managed to outwit; whether he kept out of the way that his family might make better terms for themselves, or that he might keep the remains of his money out of the hands of an undutiful son, or a grasping son-in-law; nobody can tell. He died in remote lodgings all alone, and his affairs were administered by a stranger, perhaps his landlady; no one knows. His domestic circumstances have been referred to during his life only in the vaguest way. He had a wife and a numerous family when he was put in the pillory. He had a wife, a son who was

unkind, and three daughters at the end, but that is all we know. He died at seventy-two 'of a lethargy,' no doubt fallen into the feebleness and hopelessness of lonely old age. His life overflowed with activity and business; to be doing seems to have been a necessity of his being; but he never enjoyed the importance due to his powers, and in an age when men of letters filled the highest posts never would appear to have risen above his citizen circle, his shopkeeping ways. Something in the man must have accounted for this, but it is difficult to say what it was; for the age did not require a high standard of truthfulness, and the worst of his misdoings were kept secret from the public. Perhaps his manners were not such as society, though very easy in those days, could tolerate; but this is simple guess-work. All we know of Defoe is that, as a writer, he was of the greatest influence and note, but as a man, nothing. He died, poor and alone; he had little reward for unexampled labour. When Addison was Secretary of State, and Prior an ambassador, he was nobody—a sword in the hand of an unscrupulous statesman—a shopkeeper, manufacturing his genius and selling it by the yard. A sadder conclusion never was told.

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# THE HUMOURIST

THERE is not a name in the entire range of English literature to which so full and universal appreciation has been given by posterity as that of Addison. He had his critics in his day. He had, indeed, more than critics; and from one quarter at least has received in his breast the finest and sharpest sting with which a friend estranged could point poetic vengeance. But the burden even of contemporary voices was always overwhelmingly in his favour; and nowadays there is no one in the world, we believe, that has other than gentle words for the gentle writer, the finest critic, the finest gentleman, the most tender humourist of his age. It is not only admiration but a sort of personal affection with which we look back, detecting in all the bustling companies of that witty and depraved period his genial figure, with a delightful simplicity in the midst of the formalism, and whole-heartedness among the conceits and pretensions of the fops and wits, the intriguing statesmen and busy conspirators of an age in which public faith can scarcely be said to have existed at all. He had his little defects, which were the defects of the time. And perhaps his England would not have loved him as it did had he been entirely without a

JOSEPH ADDISON

*From an engraving by Houbraken after the painting by Sir Godfrey Kneller*

share in its weaknesses. As it was, no one could call him a milksop then, as no one would venture to record any offensive name against him now. The smile of benevolent good nature, of indulgent humour, of observation always as sweet and merciful as it is acute and refined, is never absent from his countenance. He treats no man hardly; the ideal beings whom he creates are the friends of all; we could indeed more easily spare dozens of living acqaintances than we could part with Sir Roger de Coverley. Addison is the very embodiment of that delightful gift of humour on which we pride ourselves so much as a specially English quality; his soft laugh touches all the chords of sympathy and loving comprehension with a tender ridicule in which the covert praise is conveyed with double effect. That his style is the perfection in its way of English style is less dear and delightful to us than that what it expresses is the perfection of feeling. His art is the antipodes of that satirical art which views human excellence only as a delusion to be assailed on all hands, at the best insinuating motives which diminish or destroy it. Addison, on the other hand, allows imperfections which his interpretation turns into something more sweet than virtue, and throws a delightful gleam of love and laughter upon the eccentricities and characteristic follies of individual nature. That he sees everything is one of the conditions of his genial forgiveness of everything that is not mean or base or cruel. With these he makes no terms. They are not within the range of his treatment. *Non ragionam di lor.*

He passes by to the genial rural circle where all is honest, simple, and true; or to town, where in the coffee-houses themselves a kind soul will find humours enough to keep him merry without harm to any of his fellow-creatures—even the post-writers, whom he jocularly recommends to a supplementary Chelsea as having killed more men in the wars than any general ever did, or the 'needy persons' hungry for news, whom he playfully undertakes to supply.

The difference between him and the other writers of his period is one in kind not in degree; his weapon is of another metal. Swift draws a heavier shaft, which lacerates and kills; and Pope sends his needle-pointed arrows, all touched with poisonous venom, to the most vulnerable points; but Addison has no heart to slay. He transfixes the veil of folly with light, shining, irresistible darts, and pins it aloft in triumph; but he lets the fool go free; perhaps lets you see even by some reflection from his swift-flying, polished spear a gleam of human meaning in the poor wretch's face which touches your heart. Even when he diverts himself with Tom Folio or Ned Softly, instead of plunging these bores into a bottomless gulf of contempt, he plays with them as one might with a child, a twinkle of soft fun in his eye, drawing out their simple absurdities. That habit of his, which Swift describes to Stella, as one which she herself shared, of seeming to consent to follies which it is not worth while contradicting, and which Pope venomously characterises—'assents with civil leer'—lures him, and us along with him, into byways of human nature, the gates of which the im-

patient critic closes with a kick, and in which there is much amusement and little harm. Molière's Trissotin is a social conspirator meaning to build advancement upon his bad verses; but Addison's poetaster is only an exposition of harmless vanity, humoured by the gently malicious but kind and patient listener, who amid his laughter is not without a wish to please the victim too. These sketches are of a very different calibre from that creation which still charms the reader —the delightful figure of Sir Roger and all the simple folk full of follies and virtues who surround him—but they are scarcely less remarkable. The lesser pictures, taken at a sitting, in which the author has had no time to elaborate those features of human character which always draw forth his tenderness, are yet full of this instinctive sweetness, as well as of insight, keen, though always tempered, as the touch of Ithuriel's spear. The angel, indeed, was far more severe, disclosing the demon under his innocent disguise; but Addison has nothing to do with demons, he has no deep-laid plan of mischief to unveil. The worst he does is to smile and banter the little absurdities out of us—those curious little delusions which deceive ourselves as well as the world.

This most loved of English writers was the son of one of those English parsons who confuse our belief in the extremely unfavourable account given by both the graver and the lighter historians of the time of the condition of country clergymen. Neither Parson Adams in his virtue, nor Parson Trulliber in his grossness, nor Macaulay's keen and clever pictures, nor

Thackeray's fine disrespectful studies of the chaplain who marries the waiting-maid, seem to afford us any guidance as to the nature of the household which the Rev. Launcelot Addison, after many wanderings and experiences, set up in the little parish of Milston in Wiltshire, somewhere about the year 1670. Steele's description of it has, no doubt, the artificial form affected by the age, for he sets it forth as one of those models of perfection and examples to the world which nowadays we are more disposed to distrust and laugh at than to follow. 'I remember among all my acquaintances,' he says, 'but one man whom I have thought to live with his children with equanimity and a good grace'; and he goes on to describe the 'three sons and one daughter whom he bred with all the care imaginable in a liberal and ingenious way—their thoughts turned into an emulation for the superiority in kind and generous affection towards each other,' the boys behaving themselves with a manly friendship, their sister treated by them with as much complaisance as any other young lady of their acquaintance. 'It was an unspeakable pleasure to visit or sit at a meal in this family,' he adds. 'I have often seen the old man's heart flow at his eyes with joy, upon occasions which would appear indifferent to such as were strangers to the turn of his mind; but a very slight accident wherein he saw his children's goodwill to one another created in him the Godlike pleasure of loving them because they loved one another.' The family tenderness thus inculcated no doubt came from a mind full of the milk of human kindness, and happily transmitting that possession to

the gentle soul of the eldest son, who probably was the one whom the father 'had the weakness to love much better than the others'—a weakness which 'he took as much pains to correct as any other criminal passion that could arise in his mind.' Such a paternity and training does something to account for the prevailing gentleness of Addison's temper and judgments.

Dr. Addison had seen the world not in a very brilliant or luxurious way. He had been chaplain at Dunkirk, and afterwards at Tangier among the Moors upon which latter strange experience he wrote a book; and he rose afterwards to be Dean of Lichfield, a dignified clergyman. One of the brothers went to India, and attained to some eminence: the other was eventually, like Joseph, a Fellow of Magdalen. They dispersed themselves in the world as the children of a clergyman might very well do at the present day, and it is evident belonged distinctly to the caste of gentlemen. The son, with whom we have specially to do, after sundry local schoolings went to Charterhouse, which he left at fifteen for Oxford, perhaps because of his unusual advancement, more probably because the custom of the time sent boys early to the university, as is still the practice in Scotland. Addison was much distinguished in that elegant branch of learning, the writing of Latin verse, a kind of distinction which remains dear to the finest minds, in spite of all the remarks concerning its inutility and the time wasted in acquiring the art, which the rest of the world has so largely indulged in. A copy of verses upon the accession of King William, written while he

was still a very youthful scholar at Queen's College, no more than seventeen, got him his first promotion. The boy's verses came, perhaps from some proud tutor at Queen's boasting what could be done under the cupola in the High Street, finer than anything attempted in more distinguished seats of learning, into the hands of the Provost of Magdalen, to the amazement and envy of that more learned corporation. There had been no election of scholars in the previous year, during the melancholy time when the college was embroiled with King James, and the courtly Quaker Penn had all the disturbed and troubled Fellows under his heel; but now that freedom had returned with the Revolution and the heaven-sent William, there was room for a double number of distinguished poor Demys. Dr. Lancaster of Magdalen decided at once that to leave such Latinity as that of the young author of these verses to a college never very great in such gifts would be a sin against his own; and young Addison was accordingly elected to all the privileges of a Magdalen demyship. It is with this beautiful college that his name is connected in Oxford. There could be no more fit association. The noble trees and velvet lawns of Magdalen speckled with deer, shy yet friendly creatures that embellish the retired and silent glades, the long winding walk by the Cherwell round the meadows where the fritillaries grow, the time-worn dignity of the place with its graceful old-world architecture and associations, are all in the finest keeping with the shy and silent student, who talked so little and thought so much, living among his books in his college rooms, keeping his lamp alight

half through the night, or musing under the elms, where the little stream joins the greater. It is dreadful to think that in all probability Addison thought the imposing classicism of Queen's, at which the cultivated scholar of to-day shudders, much finer than Magdalen: for he had no opinion of Gothic, and lamented the weakness, if not wickedness, of those mistaken ages which wasted ornament upon such antiquated forms; but at least he loved his retired promenade under the trees, with all its sweetness of primrose and thrush in spring, and the wonderful yellow sunsets over the floods in winter, and the pleasant illusions of the winding way. There the stranger may realise still in the quiet of the cloistered shades how the shy young student wandered in the walk which bears his name, and pondered his verses and formed the delicate wealth of speech which was to distinguish him from all his fellows.

He spent about ten years in his college, first as a student and then as a Fellow, in the position which, perhaps, is more ideal for a scholar than any other in Christendom. But the young man was not much more enlightened than the other young men of his age, notwithstanding his genius at Latin verses, and that still finer genius which had not as yet come to utterance. He wrote an 'Account of the Greatest English Poets,' not much wiser than the schoolboy essays of our own day which set Lord Tennyson and Mr. Browning down in their right places. Addison went farther. He leaves out all mention of Shakespeare, and speaks of Cowley as a 'mighty genius.' He describes 'the spacious times

of great Elizabeth' as 'a barbarous age,' amused by 'Old Spenser' with 'long-spun allegories' and 'dull morals,' which had lost all power to charm an age of understanding. The youth, indeed, ran a-muck among all the greatest names, leaving the reader amused, yet shivering at his temerity. But he knew better afterwards; and if he still condescended a little to his elders and betters, learned to love and comprehend them too.

It would seem that he wavered for a time whether he should not take orders, a step necessary to retain his fellowship—and dedicate himself to the Church, as was the wish of his father. It would not have been entirely unsuitable to him, one cannot but think: to his meditative mood and shy temper and high moral tone. He would have missed the humours of town, the coffee-houses and the wits, and the vagaries of the beaux and belles; but with still a tenderer and more genial humour might have made his villagers live before us, and found out all the amusing follies of the knights and squires, which even in London town did not escape his smiling observation. The manner in which the question was decided is curiously characteristic of the age. That he was not himself inclined that way seems probable, since he bids his muse farewell after the fashion of the time, when this conclusion seemed imminent, with something like regret; and it is said that he distrusted his own fitness for the sacred office. At all events the matter came to the ears of Charles Montague, afterwards Lord Halifax, himself an elegant scholar, and at that time in office. Young Addison had addressed to him, on the occasion of the Peace of Ryswick in 1697, one of those

pieces of Latin verse for which the young man was known among the scholars of his time. He accompanied the gift with a letter couched in the hyperbole of the age, deprecating his patron's possible disapproval of 'the noble subject debased by my numbers,' and justifying himself by the poverty of the verses already published on the same theme. 'For my part,' he says, 'I never could prevail on myself to offer you a poem written in our native tongue, since you yourself deter all others by your own compositions from such an attempt as much as you excite them by your favour and humanity.' Montague returned this compliment by interfering in the young poet's concerns as soon as he heard of the danger that so promising a youth might fall into the gulf of the Church, and be lost to the other kinds of work more useful to statesmen. He wrote to the authorities of Magdalen begging that Addison might not be urged into holy orders, and in the meantime took more active measures to secure him for the state. Lord Somers had also received the dedication of some of Addison's verses, and was equally interested in the young man's career. Between them the two statesmen secured for him a pension of three hundred a year, on no pretence of work to be done or duty fulfilled, but merely that he might be able to prepare himself the better for the public service, and be thus at hand and ready when his work was wanted. Public opinion has risen up now-a-days against any such arrangement, and much slighter efforts at patronage would be denounced over all England as a job. And yet one wonders whether it was so profitless a proceeding as we think it.

Addison was worth more than the money to England. To be sure without the money he would still have been Addison ; yet something, perhaps, of the mellow sweetness of humanity in him was due to the fostering of his youth.

He went abroad in 1699, and addressed himself, in the first place, to the learning of French, which he acquired slowly at Blois, without apparently gaining much enlightenment as to the state of France or the other countries which he visited in his prolonged tour. No doubt, with his pension and the income of his fellowship Addison travelled like a young man of fortune and fashion in those times of leisure, with excellent introductions everywhere, seeing the best society, and the greatest men, both in rank and letters. Boileau admired his Latinity as much as the English statesmen had done, and the young man went upon his way more and more convinced that Latin verses were the high road to fame. From France he went to Italy, making a classical pilgrimage. 'Throughout,' says Mr. Leslie Stephen quaintly, 'if we are to judge by his narrative, he seems to have considered the scenery as designed to illustrate his beloved poets.' The much-debated uses of travel receive a new question from the records of such a journey, pursued with the fullest leisure and under the best auspices; and one wonders whether the man who hurries across a continent in a few weeks catching flying impressions, and forming crude judgments, is, after all, much less advantaged than he who, oblivious of all the human interests round him, discusses Rome, for instance, as if it had no interest later than

Martial or Silius Italicus—as if neither Church nor Pope, nor all the convulsions of the Middle Ages, nor crusader, nor Jesuit, had ever been. This extraordinary impoverishment of the imagination was the fashion of the time, just as it has been the fashion in other days to fix upon the vile records of the Renaissance as the one thing interesting in the history of a noble country.

According to that fashion, however, Addison did everything that a young man of the highest culture could be expected to do. He traced the footsteps of Æneas, and remembered every spot on which a classical battle had been fought, or an ode sung. He wrote an eloquent essay upon medals, and lingered among the sculptures of the museums; and he picked up a subject for a heroic tragedy from the suggestion of a play which he saw at a Venetian theatre. With his head full of such themes he had gone out from Oxford, and with a deepened sense of their importance he came back again. Though in after days he touches lightly with his satiric dart the young man who can talk of nothing better on his return than how 'he had like to have been drowned at such a place; how he fell out of a chaise at another'; yet in the hymn of praise with which he celebrates his own return from all the dangers of foreign travel, something like the same record is made, though in a more imposing manner.

> 'In foreign realms and lands remote,
> Supported by Thy care,
> Thro' burning climes I passed unhurt,
> And breath'd in tainted air.

Thy mercy sweetened every soil,
Made every region please,
The hoary Alpine hills it warmed,
And smooth'd the Tyrrhene seas.'

It is only the vulgarity of our modern imagination that makes us think of hot water-pipes when the idea of warming the Alps is presented to our profane minds. The burrowing of the railway that climbs the St. Gothard may be taken as a large contribution to the carrying out of this suggestion.

When Addison returned home after these four years of classical wanderings, it was to prospects sadly overcast. King William had died a year before, which had stopped his pension; Halifax was out of office, and all the hopes of public life for which he had been training himself seemed to drop as he came back. It is said that during the last year he had charge of a pupil; but there is no proof of the statement, nor has any pupil ever been identified by name. An offer was made to him to accompany upon his travels a son of the Duke of Somerset, his services in which office were to be paid by the present of a hundred guineas at the year's end; but this did not attract Addison, though it is the only authentic mention of any possible 'bear-leading,' such as Thackeray refers to in *Esmond*: and fine as is the sketch made by that kindred humourist, he seems to exaggerate at once the poverty and the neglect into which for the moment Addison fell. He returned to England in 1703, being then thirty-one, full of every accomplishment, but with only his fellowship to depend upon, and the uncertain chances of Jacob Tonson's

favour instead of the king's. He is said to have sunk, or rather risen, to a poor lodging in London, in the Haymarket, up three pair of stairs, which was indeed a sad change from the importance of his position as a rich young Englishman making the grand tour. But if he carried a disappointed or despondent heart to those elevated quarters, he never made any moan on the subject, and it is very likely enjoyed his freedom and the happy sense of being at home, like other young men; and he seems to have been at once advanced to the membership of the Kitcat Club, which would supply him with the finest of company, and a centre for the life which otherwise must have appeared as if it had come to a broken end. It was not long, however, that this period of neglect was suffered to last, and once more the transaction which elevated Addison to the sphere in which he passed the rest of his life is admirably characteristic of the period, and, alas! profoundly unlike anything that could happen to a young man of genius now.

We will not return again to any bewildering discussion of the Whigs and Tories of Queen Anne, but only say that Godolphin and Marlborough, those great Twin Brethren of the state, had come into possession of England at this great crisis, and that every means by which they could secure the suffrages of both parties were doubly necessary, considering the disappointment on one side that the policy of the country should remain unchanged, and on the other that it had to be carried out by Whig, not Tory, hands. Nothing could be better adapted than the great victory of Blenheim to arouse an

outburst of national feeling, and sweep for a time at least the punctilios of party away. The Lord Treasurer, who had everything in his hands at home, while his great partner fought and conquered abroad, was almost comically at a loss how to sound the trumpet of warlike success so as to excite the country, and, if possible, turn the heads even of the discontented. In one of Leopardi's fables there is an account of the tremendous catastrophe with which the world was threatened when his Illustrious Excellency the Sun suddenly declined one morning to rise and tread his old-world course around the earth for the comfort of mankind. 'Let her, in her turn, go round me if she wants my warmth and light,' says the potentate, with great reason it must be allowed, since Copernicus was already born, and everything in the celestial spheres was about to be set right. But how to persuade the Earth that she must now undertake this circuit? Let a poet be found to do, it is the first suggestion. *La via più spedita e la più sicura è di trovare un poeta ovvero un filosofo che persuadera alla Terra di muoversi.* Godolphin found himself in the same position as that in which the luckless agencies of the universe were left when the Sun struck work. A poet! but where to find a poet he knew not, being himself addicted to other modes of exercise and entertainment. He went to Halifax to ask where he should find what was wanted. But that statesman was coy, and held back. He could indeed an if he would, produce the very man; but why should he interfere to bring forward neglected merit, and induce a man of genius to labour for those who would afterwards leave him to perish in

obscurity? Godolphin, however, was ready to promise anything in the great necessity of the case; and Halifax permitted himself to be persuaded to mention the name which, no doubt, was bursting from his lips. He would not, however, undertake to negotiate the matter, but insisted that the real possessors of power should ask in their own persons, and with immediate and substantial proofs of their readiness to recompense the service they demanded. That day, all blazing in gold lace and splendour, the coach of the Lord Treasurer stopped before the little shop in the Haymarket, over which the young scholar had his airy abode; and that great personage clambered up the long flights of stairs, carrying with him, very possibly, the patent of the appointment, which was an earnest of what the powers that were could do for Addison. This was how the great poem of 'The Campaign,' that illustrious composition, was brought into being. Poems made to order seldom fulfil expectations, but in this case there was no disappointment. Godolphin and England were alike delighted, and Addison's life and success were at once secured.

No one now, save as an illustration of history, would think of reading 'The Campaign,' though most readers are aware of the famous simile, which dazzled a whole generation:

> 'Twas there great Marlborough's mighty soul was proved,
> That in the shock of charging hosts unmoved,
> Amidst confusion, horror, and despair,
> Examined all the dreadful scenes of war,
> In powerful thought the field of death surveyed,
> To fainting squadrons sent the timely aid,
> Inspired repulsed battalions to engage,
> And taught the doubtful battle where to rage.

So when an angel by Divine command,
With rising tempest shakes a guilty land,
Such as of late o'er pale Britannia past:
Calm and serene he drives the furious blast;
And, pleased th' Almighty's orders to perform,
Rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm.'

Macaulay points out with much felicity how the fact of the Great Storm—so called in English History—which had passed over England in the previous year, and was yet full in the memory of all, gave strength and meaning to this famous simile, which finally and at once opened to Addison the gates of fortune and of fame. Two years after he was promoted to be one of the Under-Secretaries of State, and from that time languished no more in the cold shade of obscurity, where Halifax had upbraided the Government for leaving him. He was not a man born to linger there. Shy though he was, and little apt to put himself forward, this favourite of the Muses—to use the phraseology of his time—was also the favourite of fortune. Everything that he touched throve with him. The gifts he possessed were all especially adapted to the requirements of his time. At no other period perhaps in history have the rulers of the country sought out a poet as the auxiliary most necessary to them; and his age was the only one that relished poetry of Addison's kind.

This event brought more than mere prosperity to the fortunate young man. If he had been already of note enough to belong to the Kitcat Club, with what a blaze of modest glory would he now appear, not swelling in self-conceit, like so many of the wits, not intoxicated with the sense of success, like that strange big Irish

clergyman, who pushed into the chattering company in the coffee-house, and astounded them with his masterful and arrogant ways ; but always modest—never heard at all in a large company, opening out a little when the group dispersed, and an audience fit but few gathered around him—but with one companion half divine. The one companion, by-and-by, became often that very same Irishman, whose silent prowl about the room, in which at first he knew nobody, had amused all the luckier members. Swift found himself in a kind of coffee-house paradise when he got Addison alone, and the two took their wine together, spending their half-crowns according to the stranger's thrifty record, and wishing for no third. They were as unlike as could be conceived in every particular, and yet what company they must have been, as they sat together, the wine going a little too freely, though Swift was always temperate, and Addison, notwithstanding that common peccadillo, the most irreproachable of men. It was then that the *Travels in Italy* were published, while still the fame of 'The Campaign' was warm ; and Addison gave his new friend a copy incribed to 'Jonathan Swift, the most agreeable companion, the truest friend, and the greatest genius of his age.' What quick understanding, what recognition as of two who had been born to know each other! They were both in their prime—Swift thirty-eight, Addison five years younger, still young enough to hope for everything that can befall a man ; the one fully entered upon the path of fortune, the other surely so much nearer it for being thus received and welcomed. Addison gave 'his little senate laws' for many

years in these convivial meetings, and all who surrounded him adored him. But Swift was never again so close a member of the little company. Politics, and the curious part which the Irish parson took in them, separated him from the consistent and moderate politician, who acted faithfully with his party, and who was always true, whoever might be false. But Swift held fast to Addison, so far at least as feeling was concerned. Their meetings ceased, and all those outflowings of wit and wisdom, and the talks long into the night, which were the most delightful things in life; but for years after Swift still continued to say that there was nothing his friend might not be if he would; that his election would be carried without a word of opposition when every other member had to fight for his life, and that he might be king in Ireland, or anywhere else, had he the mind. They were used to terms of large applause in those days, but to no one else did it take this particular form.

In 1708 Addison lost his post as Under-Secretary by a change of the ministry, or rather of the minister, it being the habit in those days to form a government piecemeal, a Whig here, a Tory there, as favour or circumstances required, so that it was by no means needful that all should go out or come in together. In fact, no sooner was the Under-Secretary deprived of one place than he obtained another, that of Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, the same office, we presume, as that which is now called Chief Secretary for Ireland, though its seriousness and power is now so much greater. In those days there were no Irish people to

deal with, but only a very lively, contentious, pushing, and place-hunting community—the Protestant English-Irish, which, so far as literature and public knowledge goes, has by mistake been accepted as the type of the much darker and less simple character of the Celt. The wild, mystic, morose, and often cruel nature of the native race, with its gleams of poetry and visions of fortune, has turned out a very different thing to reckon with. No such problem was presented to the statesmen of that time. The admixture of Irish blood would seem always to go to the head of the Saxon, and endow him with a gaiety and sparkle, which does not exist either in one race or the other unmixed; and it was with the society formed on this basis, the ascendant minority, contemptuous of every possible claim of the people so-called, yet far less unsympathetic with them than the anxious politicians of to-day, that Addison had to deal. His post was very 'lucrative,' we are told—in fees and pieces of patronage, no doubt, for the income was but two thousand a year—and he soon acquired an even greater popularity on the one side of the Channel than the other. Something amiable and conciliatory must have rayed out of the man; otherwise it is curious to understand the popularity in brilliant and talkative Dublin of a stranger whose chief efforts in conversation were only to be accomplished *tête-à-tête*. But he had the foil of a detestable and detested chief, Wharton, whose corrupt and brutal character gave double acceptance to the Secretary's charm and goodness. The Tories contended with the Whigs, says Swift, which should speak best of this favourite of fortune. 'How

can you think so meanly of a kingdom,' he exclaims, 'as not to be pleased that every creature in it who hath one grain of worth has a veneration for you?' It is not often that even in hyperbole such a thing can be said.

It was while Addison was in Ireland thus gathering golden opinions that an event occurred which was of the utmost importance to his reputation, so far especially as posterity was concerned. Among the little band of friends over whom he held a genial sway, and who acknowledged his superiority with boundless devotion, was one who was more nearly his equal than any other of the band; a friend of youth, one of those erratic but generous natures whose love of excellence is almost rapturous, though they are unable themselves to keep up to the high level they approve. Steele can never be forgotten where Addison is honoured. He had been at Charterhouse and at Oxford along with his friend, and no doubt it must have been a wonder among the reading men in their earlier days how it was that the correct, the polished, the irreproachable scholar of Magdalen, with his quiet ways, could put up with that gay scapegrace who was perpetually in trouble. Such alliances, however, have not been rare. The cheerful, careless Dick, full of expedients, full of animal spirits, always amusing, friendly, generous in his impulses, if unintentionally selfish in the constant breaches of his better meaning, must have had a charm for the steadier and purer nature which was formed with pulses more orderly. No doubt Steele's perpetual self-revelation, his unfolding of a hundred quips and cranks of human nature, and

unsuspicious rendering up of all his natural anomalies and contradictions to the instinctive spectatorship of his amused companion, helped to endear him to the humourist, who must have laughed till he cried on many an occasion over poor Dick's amazing wisdoms and follies, without any breach of that indulgent affection which between two men who have grown up together can rarely be said to be mingled with anything so keen as contempt. Steele, it is evident, must have known Addison 'at home,' as schoolboys say, or he could not have made that little sketch of the household where brothers and sisters were taught to be so loving to each other. While the young hero, who had, as in the favourite allegories of the time, chosen the right path, and taken the steady hand of Minerva instead of that more lovely one of fatal Venus to guide him, was reaching the heights of applause and good fortune, the unlucky youth, who chose pleasure for his pursuit, had gone disastrously the other way, and fallen into all sorts of adventures, extremely amusing to his friend to hear of, though he disapproved, and no doubt also very amusing to the actual actor in them, though he suffered. But Addison was not a mere spectator so far as the friend of his youth was concerned. When he began to rise, there seems little reason to doubt that he pulled Steele up with him, introducing him to the notice of the fine people, who in those days might make the fortune of a gentlemanly and clever adventurer; and that, either by his own interest or that of one of his powerful friends, he procured him a place and started him in public life. Steele had already floated into literature; and whether

it is true or not that Addison helped him in the concoction of one play at least, it is clear that he kept his purse and his heart well open to his friend, now a man about town ruffling at the coffee-houses with the best, and full of that energy and readiness which so often strikes out new ways of working, though it may require steadier heads to carry them out.

It was, however, while Addison was in Ireland that Steele was moved by the most important of these original impulses, an idea full, as it proved, of merit and practical use. Journalism was then in its infancy. A little 'News Letter,' or 'Flying Post,' a shabby broadsheet containing the bulletin of a battle, a formal and brief notice of parliamentary proceedings, an account of some monstrous birth, a child with two heads, or that perennial gooseberry which has survived into our own time, and an elaborate list of births, deaths, and marriages, was almost all that existed in the way of public record. The post to which Steele had been appointed was that of Gazetteer, which naturally led him to the consideration of such matters; and among the crowd of projects which worked together in his 'barmy noddle,' there suddenly surged uppermost the idea of a paper which should come out on the post days, the Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, which were up to that time the only days of communication with the country: a paper written after the fancy of the time, in reality a letter from the wits and the knowing persons in town, revealing not only the existing state of public affairs, but all those exquisite particulars of society which have always been the delight of country circles, and which were

doubly sure to please at a time when society was governed by talk, when all public criticism was verbal, and the echoes of the wits in the coffee-houses were blown about on every breeze.

Happy was Sir Harry from the country, sitting mum over his wine in a corner, who could hear these gentlemen discussing what Sunderland or Somers had said, what my Lord Treasurer intended; or, more delightful still, the newest incident in the tragedy-comedy of the great duchess — how the queen looked glumly at her over the card-table, or let her stand unnoticed at a drawing-room. And, still more deeply blessed was the parson who had Mr. Addison pointed out to him, and heard the young Templars and scholars pressing him with questions as to when his 'Cato' was coming out, or asking his opinion on a set of verses. Such worthies would go back to the country full of these reflections from the world, and tell how the gallants laughed at the mantua which was going out of fashion, and made fun of the red heels which, perhaps, were just then appearing at the Manor or the Moated Grange. Steele saw at once what a thing it would be to convey these impressions at first hand in a privileged *Tatler* direct to the houses of the gentry all over the country. Perhaps he did not perceive at first what a still finer thing to have them served up with the foaming chocolate or fragrant tea at every breakfast in Mayfair.

It is an idea that has occurred to a great many heads since with less success. In these latter days there have been many literary adventurers, to whom the starting of a new paper has seemed an opening into El Dorado. But the opening in the majority of cases does not prove

a practicable one. For, in fact, there is no longer any need of such news; and the concise little essays and elegant banterings of the critics of that time have fallen out of date. News means in our days an elaborate system, and instantaneous reports from all the world; and one London newspaper — far more one of the gigantic journals proper to America—contains as much matter as half a hundred 'Tatlers.' One wonders if Addison's genius, and the light hand of Steele, and Swift's tremendous and scathing humour could be conjured up again, whether such a production with its mingled thread of the finest sentiments and the pettiest subjects, metaphysics and morals, and the *Eneid* and *Paradise Lost* and periwigs and petticoats would find sufficient acceptance with 'the fair' and the wise to keep it afloat, and would still go up to sages and fine ladies with their breakfast trays?

It was on the immediate foundation of one of Swift's savage *jeux d'esprit* that the new undertaking was begun, a mystification which greatly amused the wits then, but which does not perhaps appear particularly delightful now. Swift had been seized by a freak of mischief in respect to a certain Partridge, an astrologer, who made an income out of the public by pretended revelations of the future—as is still done, we believe, among those masses, beneath the ascertained audience of literature, who spend their sixpences at Christmas upon almanacks and year-books containing predictions of what is to happen. It occurred to Swift in some merry moment to emulate and to doom the Merlin of the day; and with the prodigious gravity which characterises his greatest jests he wrote, 'Predictions

for the year 1708,' in which, among many other things, he announced that he had consulted the stars on behalf of Partridge, and had ascertained that the wizard would certainly die on March 29, at eleven at night, of a raging fever. The reader will perhaps remember that the jest was kept up, and that, notwithstanding Partridge's protest that he was not dead at all, Isaac Bickerstaff insisted on asserting that his prophecy had been fulfilled, to the grave confusion of various serious affairs, and the inextinguishable laughter of the wits. It was not a pretty jest, but it brought into being a visionary critic of public matters, a new personage in the literary world, in whom other wits saw capabilities. Steele in particular perceived that Isaac Bickerstaff was just the personality he wanted, and therewith proceeded to make of that shadowy being the Mentor of the time. The design was excellent, and the immediate execution cleverly adapted to seize the interest of the public, which had been already amused and mystified under that name. Mr. Isaac Bickerstaff presented his readers with the first number of his journal without charge. 'I earnestly desire,' he says, 'all persons without distinction to take it in for the present gratis, and hereafter at the price of one penny, forbidding all hawkers to take more for it at their peril.' The idea took the town. No doubt there would be many an allusion to this and that which the wits would guess at, and which would to them have a double meaning; but to do the 'Tatler' justice, the kind of gossip which fills the so-called society newspaper in our day was unknown to the witty gentleman who sometimes satirised a ruffle

or a shoe tie, but never personally a woman. The types of fine ladies who fluttered through his pages could never raise a pang in any individual bosom, and when he addressed himself to the reform of the theatre, to the difficult duty of checking play and discouraging duels, he had all the well-thinking on his side.

Steele had gone on for some numbers before his new venture attracted the attention of Addison. He recognised whose the hand was from a classical criticism in the sixth number which he had himself made to Steele; and he must have been pleased with the idea, since he soon after appears as a coadjutor, sending his contributions from the secretary's office in Dublin. There has been a great and prolonged controversy upon the respective merits of these two friends: some, and first among them Macaulay, will have it that Addison had all the merit of the publication. 'Almost everything good in the *Tatler* was his,' says the historian. But there are many who, despite of Macaulay's great authority, find a certain difficulty in distinguishing Addison from Steele and Steele from Addison, and are inclined to find the latter writer as entertaining and as gifted as the former. No question could be more difficult to settle. As we glance over the little grey volumes which bring back to us dimly the effect which the little broadsheet must have had when it appeared day by day, there is no doubt that the eye is oftenest caught by something which, when we look again, proves to be from Addison's hand. We open, it is by chance, and yet not altogether by chance, upon Tom Folio and his humours; upon the poor poet and his verses; upon

some group of shabby heroes, or stumbling procession of country gentlemen which there is no mistaking. But on the other hand, it is Steele who gives us that family picture, which reads like the *Vicar of Wakefield*, yet with a more tender touch (for Mrs. Primrose was never her husband's equal), showing us the good woman among her family, the husband half-distracted with the fear of losing her, the wife for his sake smiling her paleness[1] away. Indeed we think, in these early essays at least, it would be a mistake for the critic to risk his reputation on the superiority of Addison. He set up no higher standard than that which his friend had raised, but fell into the same humour, adding his contribution of social pictures generally with less force of moral and more delicacy of workmanship, but no remarkable pre-eminence.

The character of the publication, however, changed gradually as the great new pen came into it; but whether by Addison's influence or by the mere action of time, and a sense of what suited the audience he had obtained—which a soul so sympathetic as Steele's would naturally divine with readiness—no one can tell. Gradually the news which at first had regularly filled a column dropped away. It had been, no doubt, well authenticated news, the freshest and best, as it came from the authorised hand of the Gazetteer; but either Steele got tired of supplying it, or a sense of the inexpediency of publishing anything which might displease his patrons and the government convinced him that it was unnecessary. It is scarcely possible either

[1] *Tatler*, No. 95.

to tell why the *Tatler* came to an end. Mr. Austin Dobson, in his recent *Life of Steele*, gives sundry reasons, which do not seem, however, of any particular weight. Steele's own account is that he had become known, and his warnings and lessons were thus made of no avail:

'I considered,' he says, 'that severity of manners was absolutely necessary to him who would censure others, and for that reason, and that only, chose to talk in a mask. I shall not carry my humility so far as to call myself a vicious man, but at the same time confess my life is at best but pardonable. And with no greater character than this a man could make an indifferent progress in attacking prevailing and fashionable vices, which Mr. Bickerstaff has done with a freedom of spirit that would have lost both its beauty and efficacy had it been pretended to by Mr. Steele.'

This reason is, however—though pretty, and just enough, had its writer renounced the trade—a somewhat fantastic one when we reflect that though the *Tatler* ended in January 1711, the *Spectator* began in March of the same year. The one died only to be replaced by the other. It is said that Addison did not know of his friend's intention to cut the *Tatler* short, and it was he who was the chief agent in beginning the *Spectator*. Therefore it may have been that the breach was but an impatience of Steele's, which his slower and less impulsive and more constant comrade could not permanently consent to. No doubt Addison had by this time learned the advantage of such a mode of utterance, and felt how entirely it suited his own manner of work and constitution of mind. The fictitious person of Isaac Bickerstaff was relinquished in the new series: its contents were less varied, consisting generally of a single essay; and

notwithstanding the impression which the casual reader often has, and which some writers have largely dwelt upon, that the comments of the critic are upon the merest vanities of the time, the hoops, the gold-lace, the snuff-boxes, and patches of the period, it is astonishing how little space is actually taken up with these lighter details, and how many graver questions, how many fine sentiments and delicate situations, afford the moralist occasion for those remarks which he makes in the most beautiful and picturesque English to the edification of all the generations. There is, perhaps, no book which is so characteristic of an epoch in history, and none which gives so clear a conception of the English world of the time. We sit and look on, always amused, often instructed, while the delicate panorama unfolds before us—and see everything pass, the fine coaches, the gentlemen on foot, the parsons in their gowns, the young Templars jesting in the doorways—but always with the little monologue going on, which accompanies the movement, and runs off into a hundred by-ways of thought, sometimes serious, sometimes gay, often having no particular connection with the many-coloured streams of passers-by, yet never obscuring our sight of them as they come and go.

There is, perhaps, a noisy group at the door while Mr. Spectator talks, with their wigs in the last fashion, and their clouded canes hung to a button, while they discourse. In one corner there are some two or three grave gentlemen putting their heads together over the latest news; and in another, the young fellows over their wine eager in discussion of Mrs. Oldfield and Mrs.

Bracegirdle at the theatre, or of Chloe and Clarissa, the reigning beauties of society; or perhaps it is a poet, poor Ned Softly, as the case may be, who is reading his last sonnet to his mistress's eyebrow, amid the laughing commentaries or the ridicule of his companions. What is Mr. Spectator talking of all the while? His discourse does not prevent us hearing the impertinences of the others. Perhaps he is talking of honest love, a favourite theme of his, at which the wits do not dare to laugh in his presence; or he is telling one of his fables, to which everybody in the midst of his levity or his business gives half an hour at least; or by a caprice he has turned aside to metaphysics, and is discussing the processes of the mind, and how 'no thought can be beautiful that is not just'; how ''tis a property of the heart of man to be diffusive, its kind wishes spread abroad over the face of the creation,' and such like; not to speak of graver subjects still to which he will often direct our minds on Saturdays, perhaps to prepare us for Sunday, when he is silent. Or he will read aloud a letter from some whimsical correspondent, which the wits will pause to hear, for gossip is ever sweet; but which before they know lands them in a case of hardship or trouble which touches their consciences and rouses their pity. Sometimes the hum of life will stop altogether, and even Softly put his verses in his pocket to listen: and on the brink of tears the fine gentlemen, and we too along with them, incontinently burst out a-laughing at some touch that no one expected.

But whether we laugh or cry, or are shamed in our levity, or diverted in our seriousness, outside the win-

dows the crowd is always streaming on. There is no separating the 'Spectator' from the lively, crowded, troublous, and perplexing scenes upon which all his reflections are made. The young lady looking out of her coach, at sight of whom all the young fellows doff their hats and make their comments, how much her fortune is, who is in pursuit of her, or if any mud has yet been flung upon her, shows to the philosopher a face disturbed with all the puzzles of an existence which nobody will allow her to take seriously. The poor wit who endeavours so wistfully to amuse my lord in his dulness betrays to that critic not so much the soul of a toady as that of the anxious father with children that starve at home. His young fellows, though they look so careless, have their troubles too. Wherever that keen eye turns another group shows through the crowd, or a lonely whimsical figure as distinct as if there was no one but he. Save, perhaps, on those Saturdays when he plays his soft accompaniment to Milton's grand sonorous organ, he is never abstracted or retired from men; on all other occasions, though he is thinking of a great deal else, and has his mind absorbed in other themes, this busy world of which he forms a part is always with him. Sometimes he permits us to see him over their heads only, seated on his familiar bench at his table, from whence he delivers his homilies, with all these figures moving and changing on the busy pavement in the foreground; sometimes we are admitted inside, and watch them through open door and window by his side; but he is never to be parted from the society in which he finds his models, his subjects, his audience.

Like other men, he takes it for granted that the fashion of his contemporaries is to go on for ever. For posterity that smiling keen observer takes no thought.

But of all things else that Addison has done there remains one pre-eminent figure which is his chief claim to immortality. 'The Campaign' has disappeared out of literature; 'Cato' is known only by a few well-known lines; the '*Spectator*' itself, though a work which no gentleman's library can be without, dwells generally in a dignified retirement there, and is seldom seen on any table but the student's, though we are all supposed to be familiar with it; but Sir Roger de Coverley is the dear friend of most people who have read anything at all, and the acquaintance by sight, if we may so speak, of everybody. There is no form better known in all literature. His simple rustic state, his modest sense of his own importance, his kind and genial patronage of the younger world, which would laugh at him if it were not overawed by his modesty and goodness, and which still sniggers in its sleeve at all those kind ridiculous ways of his as he walks about in London, taken in on all sides, with his hand always in his purse, and his heart in its right place, are always familiar and delightful. We learn with a kind of shock that it was Steele who first introduced this perfect gentleman to the world, and can only hope that he was originally Addison's idea, and that he did not merely snatch out of his friend's hands and appropriate a conception so entirely according to his own heart. To Steele, too, we are indebted for some pretty scenes in the brief history; for Will the

huntsman's wooing, which is the most delicate little enamel, and for the knight's own love-making, which, however, is pushed a little too near absurdity. But it is Addison who leads him forth among his country neighbours, and to the assizes, and meets the gypsies with him, and brings him up to town, carrying him to Westminster and to Spring Gardens, in the wherry with the one-legged waterman, and to the play. The delightful gentleman is never finer than in this latter scene. He has to be conveyed in his coach, attended by all his servants, armed with 'good oaken plants,' and Captain Sentry in the sword he had worn at Steinkirk, for fear of the Mohocks, those brutal disturbers of the public peace whom Addison justly feels it would be unbecoming to bring within sight of his noble old knight.

'As soon as the house was full and the candles lighted, my old friend stood up and looked about him with that pleasure which a mind seasoned with humanity naturally feels in itself at the sight of a multitude of people who seem pleased with one another, and partake of the same common entertainment. I could not but fancy to myself as the old man stood up in the middle of the pit that he made a very proper centre to a tragick audience. Upon the entering of Pyrrhus, the knight told me that he did not believe the King of France had a better strut. I was indeed very attentive to my old friend's remarks because I looked upon them as a piece of natural criticism, and was well pleased to hear him at the conclusion of almost every scene telling me that he could not imagine how the play would end; one while he appeared much concerned for Andromache, and a little while after as much for Hermione; and was extremely puzzled to know what would become of Pyrrhus. When Sir Roger saw Andromache's ob-

stinate refusal to her lover's importunities, he whispered me in the ear, that he was sure she would never have him; to which he added with more than ordinary vehemence, "You can't imagine, sir, what 'tis to have to do with a widow." Upon Pyrrhus his threatening afterwards to leave her, the knight shook his head and murmured, "Ay! do it if you can." This part dwelt so much upon my friend's imagination that at the close of the third act, as I was thinking of something else, he whispered in my ear, "These widows, sir, are the most perverse creatures in the world. But pray," says he, "you that are a critick, is this play according to your dramatick rules, as you call them? Should your people in tragedy always talk to be understood? Why, there is not a single sentence in this play that I do not know the meaning of!"

'The fourth act very luckily began before I had time to give the old gentleman an answer. "Well," says the knight, sitting down with great satisfaction, "I suppose we are now to see Hector's ghost?" He then renewed his attention, and from time to time fell a-praising the widow. He made, indeed, a little mistake as to one of her pages, whom, at his first entering, he took for Astyanax; but we quickly set him right in that particular, though at the same time he owned he should have been very glad to see the little boy who, says he, must needs be a very fine child by the account that is given to him."

Could anything be more delightful than this genial easy picture? We have all met in later years a certain Colonel Newcome who is very like Sir Roger, one of his descendants, though he died a bachelor. But the Worcestershire knight was the first of his lineage, and few are the gifted hands who have succeeded in framing men after his model. Those little follies which are so dear to us, the good faith which makes the young men laugh, yet feel ashamed of themselves for laughing, and all the circumstances of that stately simple life which

are so different from anything we know, yet so life-like and genuine, have grown into the imagination of the after-generations. We seem to know Sir Roger from our cradle, though we may never even have read the few chapters of his history. This is the one infallible distinction of genius above all commoner endowments. Of all the actors in that stirring time Sir Roger remains the most living and real. The queen and her court are no more than shadows moving across the historic stage. Halifax, and Somers, and Harley, and even the great Bolingbroke, what are they to us? figures confused and uncertain that appear and disappear in one combination or another, so that our head aches in the effort to follow, to identify, to make sure what the intrigues and the complications mean. But we have no difficulty in recollecting all about Sir Roger. We would not have the old man mocked at any more than Mr. Addison would, but kiss his kind old hand as we smile at those little foibles which are all-ingratiating and delightful. In that generation, with all its wars and successes, there was, perhaps, no such gain as Sir Roger. Marlborough's victories made England feared and respected, but cost the country countless treasure, and gave her little advantage; the good knight cost nobody anything and made all the world the richer. He is one of those inhabitants who never grow old or pass away, and he gives us proof undeniable that when we speak of a corrupt and depraved age, as we have reason to do, we have still nobler reason for believing—as the despairing prophet was taught by God Himself in far older times, that however dark might be the prospect

there were still seven thousand men in Israel who had never bowed the knee to Baal—a truth which we learn over again, thank Heaven! from shining example everywhere, that there are always surviving the seed of the just, the salt of the earth, by whose silent agency, and pure love, and honest truth, life is made practicable and the world rolls on.

Sir Roger is the great point of the *Spectator*, as the *Spectator* is the truest history of the time. It contains, however, beside, much that is admirable and entertaining, as well as a good deal that was temporary and is now beyond the fashion of our understanding, or, at least, of our appreciation. Addison's criticism, or rather exposition, of Milton, for instance, which no doubt taught his age a far more general regard for that great poet, is no longer necessary to us, nor worth the effort of keeping it in sight. When these criticisms began it is evident that Addison, as well as his friend Steele, had made a great advance from the time when the young Oxford scholar left Shakespeare out of his reckoning altogether, and considered 'Old Spenser' only fit to amuse a barbarous age. Though the balance of things had not been redressed throughout the English world, yet these scholars had come to perceive that the greatness of their predecessors had been perhaps a little mixed up, that Cowley was not so mighty a genius as their boyhood believed, and that there were figures as of gods behind which it was shame to have misconceived. Throughout all, the meaning was wholesome and tended towards the elevation of the time. Steele had it specially at heart to discourage gambling and put down the hate-

ful tyranny of the duel. And both writers used all their powers to improve and raise the character of theatrical representations: keeping a watch not only over the plays that were performed but also over the manners of the audience who crowded the stage so that the players could scarcely be seen, and played cards in their boxes, and used the public entertainment for their own private quarrels, and assignations. It is curious, too, to note how these authorities regarded the opera, the new form of amusement which had pushed its way, against all the prejudices of the English, into fashion. Addison himself, indeed, wrote an opera which was not successful; but he did not love that new-fangled entertainment. He devotes two or three numbers to the description of it, for, says he, 'there is no question our grandchildren will be very anxious to know the reason why their forefathers used to sit together like an audience of foreigners in their own country, and hear whole plays acted before them in a tongue which they did not understand.' It is evident by this that his age had not reached to the further sublimity of believing that when the utterance is musical there is no need of understanding at all. 'One scarce knows how to be serious,' he adds, 'in the confutation of an absurdity that shows itself at the first sight. It does not want any great measure of sense to see the ridicule of this most monstrous practice. If, the Italians have a genius for music above the English the English have a genius for other performances of a much higher nature, and capable of giving the mind a much nobler entertainment.' We wonder if our 'Spectator' would be less affronted now by the constant

adaptation of equivocal French plays to the English stage, than by the anomaly of a representation given in a language which nobody understood? He would perhaps feel it to be an advantage often not to understand; and doubt whether the English after all 'have a genius for other performances of a much higher nature.'

We are not informed that the *Tatler* and *Spectator*, the real foundations of his fame, gave Addison any help in his career. That was assured by 'The Campaign.' He received his first post, that of 'a Commissionership with two hundred pounds a year,' in the end of 1704, his pension having ceased at King William's death in 1702; the interval is not a very long one, and during this time he had retained his college Fellowship. In 1706 he became Under-Secretary. In 1708 his chief, Lord Sunderland, was dismissed and Addison along with him; but he stepped immediately into the Irish Secretaryship, which was worth two thousand a year. Two years afterwards occurred the political convulsions brought about by the trial of Sacheverell and the intrigues of the back stairs, which brought Harley into power, and Addison with his leaders was once more out of office; but in 1714 they came triumphantly back, and he rose to the height of political elevation as Secretary of State with a seat in the Cabinet. Though he did not retain this position long on account of his failing health, he retired on a pension of £1500 a year. In 1711, at a period when he was supposed to be at a low ebb of fortune, in the cold shade of political opposition, he was able to buy the estate of Bilton, near Rugby, for which he paid £10,000—which is not

bad for a moment of misfortune. Altogether Addison was provided for as the deserving and honourable hero —the wise youth of one of his own allegories, the good apprentice—should be by poetic justice, but is not always in the experience of the world.

The success of the *Spectator*, however, which was more his than Steele's (as the *Tatler* had been much more Steele's than Addison's) was apparently very considerable; Addison himself says, in an early number, that it had reached a circulation of three thousand copies a day. On a special occasion fourteen thousand copies are spoken of; and the passing of the Stamp Act, which destroyed many of the weaker publications of the time, did comparatively little harm to the *Spectator*, which doubled its price without much diminishing its popularity. It had also, what no other daily and very few periodicals of any kind ever reach, the advantage of a permanent issue afterwards, in a succession of volumes, of which the first edition seems to have reached an issue of ten thousand copies. Fortunate writers! pleasant public! The *Times* and the rest of our great newspapers boast a circulation beyond that which the eighteenth century could have dreamed of; and thirty years ago it was the fashion among public orators more indebted to genius than education—the late Mr. Cobden for one, and, we think, Mr. John Bright —to say that the leading articles of that day were more than equal to Thucydides and all the other writers of whom classical scholars made their boast. But we wonder how the *Times* leaders would read collected into a volume against those little dingy

books (tobacco paper, as a contemporary says) with all their wisdom and their wit. 'I will not meddle with the *Spectator*,' says Swift to Stella, 'let him fair-sex it to the world's end.' And so he has, at least as far as the world has yet advanced towards that not undesirable conclusion.

The *Spectator*, however, ended with the year 1712, having existed less than two years. Whether the authors had found their audience beginning to fail, or their inspiration—or had considered it wise (as is most likely) to forestall the possibility of either catastrophe, we are not informed. Almost immediately after the conclusion of this greatest undertaking of his life, Addison plunged into what probably appeared to the weakness of contemporary vision a much greater undertaking, the production of his tragedy 'Cato,' which made such a commotion in town as few plays did even at that period. It was partly with a political intention, to stir up the patriotism and love of liberty, which were supposed to be failing under the dominion of the Tories, suspected of all manner of evil designs, that his Whig friends urged Addison to bring out the great play which had been simmering in his brain since his travels, and which had no doubt been read in detached acts and pieces of declamation to all his literary friends. These friends had received several additions in the meantime, especially in the person of Pope, who was still young enough to be proud of Addison's notice, yet remarkable enough to be entrusted with the composition of a prologue to the great man's work. Swift, notwithstanding the coldness which had ensued between them on

his change of politics, was still sufficiently in Addison's friendship to be present at a rehearsal, and the whole town on both sides was moved with excitement and expectation. 'On the first night, our house,' says Cibber 'was in a manner invested and entrance demanded by twelve o'clock at noon; and before one it was not wide enough for many who came too late for their places.' The following account of its reception is given in a letter by Pope:

'The numerous and violent claps of the Whig party on the one side of the theatre were echoed back by the Tories on the other, while the author sweated behind the scenes with concern to find their applause proceeding more from the hand than the head. This was the case, too, with the prologue-writer, who was clapped into a sound Whig at the end of every two lines. I believe you have heard that after all the applauses of the opposite faction, my Lord Bolingbroke sent for Booth, who played 'Cato,' into the box between one of the acts, and presented him with fifty guineas, in acknowledgment, as he expressed it, for defending the cause of liberty so well against a perpetual dictator. The Whigs are unwilling to be distanced this way, and therefore design a present to the same 'Cato' very speedily.'

Bolingbroke's speech about a perpetual dictator was a gibe which everybody understood, directed against the devotion of the Whigs to Marlborough, and was quite honest warfare; but what, we wonder, would Mr. Irving think if Mr. Gladstone sent for him to his box 'and presented him with fifty guineas'? The actor who considers himself one of the most distinguished members of good society had not been thought of in those days. One wonders, too, in passing where a fine

gentleman kept his money, and whether the purse of the stage, which is always ready to be flung to a deserving object, was a reality in the days of Queen Anne? Fifty guineas is a somewhat heavy charge for the pocket; however, perhaps Lord Bolingbroke had come specially provided, or he had a secretary handy who did not mind the bulging of his coat.

Of this great tragedy, which turned the head of London, and which the two great political parties vied with each other in applauding, there are but a few lines virtually existing nowadays. To be sure, it is in print with the rest of Addison's works, to be read by whosoever will. But very few avail themselves of that privilege.

> 'Tis not in mortals to command success,
> But we'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it'

is the chief relic, and that of a very prosaic common-sense and familiar kind, which the great tragedy has left us. 'Plato, thou reasonest well!' is another quotation which is, perhaps, more frequently used in a jocular than serious sense. But for these scraps 'Cato' is as dead as most of his contemporaries; and we do not even remember the great tragedy when we hear the name of its author. We think, indeed, only of the *Spectator* if we have read a little in the literature of the period; but if we have no special tastes and studies that way, of Sir Roger de Coverley alone; for Sir Roger is Addison's gift to his country and the world—the creation by which his name will always be known.

The end of a man's life is seldom so interesting as its beginning. After he has achieved all of which he is

capable, our interest is more usually a sad than a cheerful one. Addison made in 1716 what seems to have been an ambitious marriage, though he was not the man, one would think, to care for the rank which gave his wife always a distinct personality and another name than his. The Countess of Warwick, however, was, it would appear, a beautiful woman. She had the charge of a troublesome boy, for whom, no doubt, she would be eager to have the advice of such a man as Mr. Addison, whom all the world respected and admired. The little house at Chelsea—the house was called Sandford Manor House, and was lately portrayed against its present doleful background of gasometers, in the *Century*—which that statesman had acquired, and where he delighted to withdraw from the noise and contention of town, was within reach through the fields of Holland House, the residence of Lady Warwick. They had known each other for years, and Addison had written exquisite little letters to the boy-earl—no doubt with intentions upon the heart of the mother, to which, as is well known, that method is a very successful way—long before. It was, Dr. Johnson says, a long and anxious courtship; and perhaps—who knows?—when Steele performed that picture of the beloved knight sitting silent before the two fine ladies and unable to articulate the desires of his honest heart, it was some similar performance of the shy man of genius who found utterance with such difficulty which was in Dick's mind. But perhaps Addison grew bolder when he was Secretary of State. The great Mr. Addison, the delightful 'Spectator,' the author of 'Cato,' the man

whose praises were in everybody's mouth, and whom Whig and Tory delighted to honour, was no insignificant fine gentleman for a lady of rank to stoop to; and finally, those evening walks over the fields, and pleasant rural encounters—for Chelsea was the country in those days, and Holland House quite retired among all the songsters of the grove, and out of town—came to a legitimate conclusion. Addison was forty, and her ladyship had been a widow for fifteen years; but there is no reason therefore for concluding that there was no romance in the wedding, which, however, is always a nervous sort of business under such circumstances. There was the boy, too, to be taken into account, who evidently was not a nice boy, but a tale-bearer, who did not love his mother's faithful lover, and made mischief when he could. There seems no evidence, however, that the marriage was unhappy, beyond a malicious note of Pope's, which all the commentators have enlarged. The poor women who have the misfortune to be married to men of genius fare badly at the hands of the critics. There seems no warrant whatever for Thackeray's picture of the vulgar vixen whom he called Mrs. Steele. Steele's letters exist, but not those of poor Prue, who so sadly tried her husband; and so that suffering woman has to suffer over again in her reputation after her life's trouble is over. It is very unfair to the poor women who have left no champions behind.

The end of our 'Spectator's' life was, however, clouded with more than one unfortunate quarrel, the greatest of which has left its sting behind to quiver in Addison's name as long as Pope and he are known. It

is neither necessary nor edifying to enter at length into the bitterness of the past. Pope fancied himself aggrieved in various ways by the man who had warmly acknowledged his youthful merits, and received him (though so much his senior in years and fame) on a footing of equality, and who all through never spoke an ill-natured word of the waspish little poet. He believed, or persuaded himself to believe in his malignant little soul, that Addison was jealous of his greatness, and had set up Tickell to rival him in the translation of Homer; and he believed, or pretended to believe, on the supposed authority of young Warwick, that Addison had hired a vulgar critic to attack him. There seems not the slightest reason to believe that either of these grievances was real. Tickell had written simultaneously a translation of Homer, which Addison had read and corrected, on account of which he courteously declined to read Pope's translation of the same, telling him the reason, but accepting the office of critic to the second part of Pope's work. He had himself, according to the poet's brag, accepted Pope's corrections of 'Cato,' leaving 'not a word unchanged that I objected to': and he was not moved to any retaliation by Pope's attack upon him, but continued serenely to praise his envious little assailant, with a magnanimity which is wonderful, if he had seen the brilliant and pitiless picture so cunningly drawn within the lines of nature, with every feature travestied so near the real, that even Addison's most faithful partisan has to pause with alarm lest the wicked thing so near the truth might perhaps be true. We hesitate to add to the serene and

gentle story of our man of letters this embittered utterance of spite and malice and genius. The lines are sufficiently well known.

Addison did not end his periodical work with the *Spectator*. He took up that familiar character once again for a short time, long enough to produce an additional volume—the eighth—in which he had no longer the help of his old vivacious companion. The series is full of fine things, but we are not sure, though Macaulay thinks otherwise, that we do not a little miss the light and shade which Steele helped to supply. And other publications followed. Steele himself set up the *Guardian*, in which Addison had little share; and various others after that, in which he had no share at all. And Addison himself had a *Freeholder*, in which he said some notable things; but these are all dead and gone, like so much of the contemporary furnishings of the age. Students find and read them in the old, collected editions; but life and recollection have gone out of them. Perhaps his own time even had by then got as much as it could enjoy and digest out of Addison. We, at least, have done so after these hundred and fifty years, and are capable of no more.

He died in 1719, at the early age of forty-seven. The story goes that he sent for young Warwick when he was on his death-bed, that he might see how a Christian could die: which, we should say, was unlike Addison; unless it was that he had been drawing morals all his life, and might at that supreme moment be beyond seeing the ridicule of the last exhibition. Perhaps it was in reality a message of charity and forgiveness to

the wayward boy, who, there seems reason to believe, was never fond of his stepfather. And thus the great writer glided gently out of a life, in which he had more honour than falls to the lot of most men, and, let us hope, a great deal of mild satisfaction and pleasure. Thackeray has a little scoff at him as a man without passion. 'I doubt, until after his marriage, whether he ever lost his night's rest or his day's tranquillity about any woman in his life.' Neither, perhaps, did Sir Roger, whose forty years' love-making and unrequited affection was a sentimental luxury of the most delicate kind, as his maker intended it to be. But Addison's fine and meditative genius had no need of passion. He is the 'Spectator' of humankind. He had little temptation in his own calm nature to descend into the arena; the honours of the fight came to him somehow without any soil of the actual engagement. No smoke of gunpowder is about his laurels, no spot of blood upon his sword. He looks on at the others fighting, always with a nod of encouragement for the man of honour and virtue, of keen scorn for the selfish and evil-minded, of pity for the fallen. But it is not his part to fight. He makes no pretence of any inclination that way. He is the looker-on; and, as such, more valuable to us than a hundred men-at-arms.

He died at Holland House, that fine historical mansion, sacred to the wits of a later age, but which, in Addison's time, contained no tyrannical tribunal of literary patronage, whatever else there might be there which was contrary to peace. His life and death give it an association more touching, and at the same time of

sweeter meaning, than the after-struggles of the Whig men of letters for Lady Holland's arbitrary favour. The great humourist died in the middle of the summer, in June 1719, and was carried from that leafy retirement to the Jerusalem Chamber, where he lay in state: why, it seems difficult to understand—but his position had in it a kind of gentle royalty unlike that of other men. He was buried at Westminster by night, the wonderful solemn arches over the funeral party, half seen by the wavering lights, vanishing into vistas of mysterious gloom, echoing with the hymns of the choir, who sang him to his rest. Did they sing, one wonders, one of those verses which had been the most intimate utterance of his life, that great hymn of creation, scarcely inferior to the angelic murmurings of mediæval Francis in his cell at Assisi?

'Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wondrous tale,
And nightly to the listening earth
Repeats the story of her birth;
Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.'

Or was it one of those humbler and more fervent human utterances of faith and humility and thanksgiving?

'Through every period of my life,
Thy goodness I 'll pursue,
And after death in distant worlds,
The glorious theme renew.

When nature fails, and day and night
Divide Thy works no more,
My ever-grateful heart, O Lord!
Thy mercy shall adore.

Through all Eternity to Thee
A joyful song I'll raise,
But, oh! Eternity's too short
To utter all Thy praise.'

With such soft, yet rapturous strain, the lofty arches and half-seen aisles—perhaps with a summer moon looking in, taking up the wondrous tale—might have echoed over Addison, the gentlest soul of all those noble comrades who lie together awaiting the restitution of all things—when our great humourist, our mildest, kind 'Spectator,' all his comments over, was laid in the best resting-place England can give to those whom she loves.

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